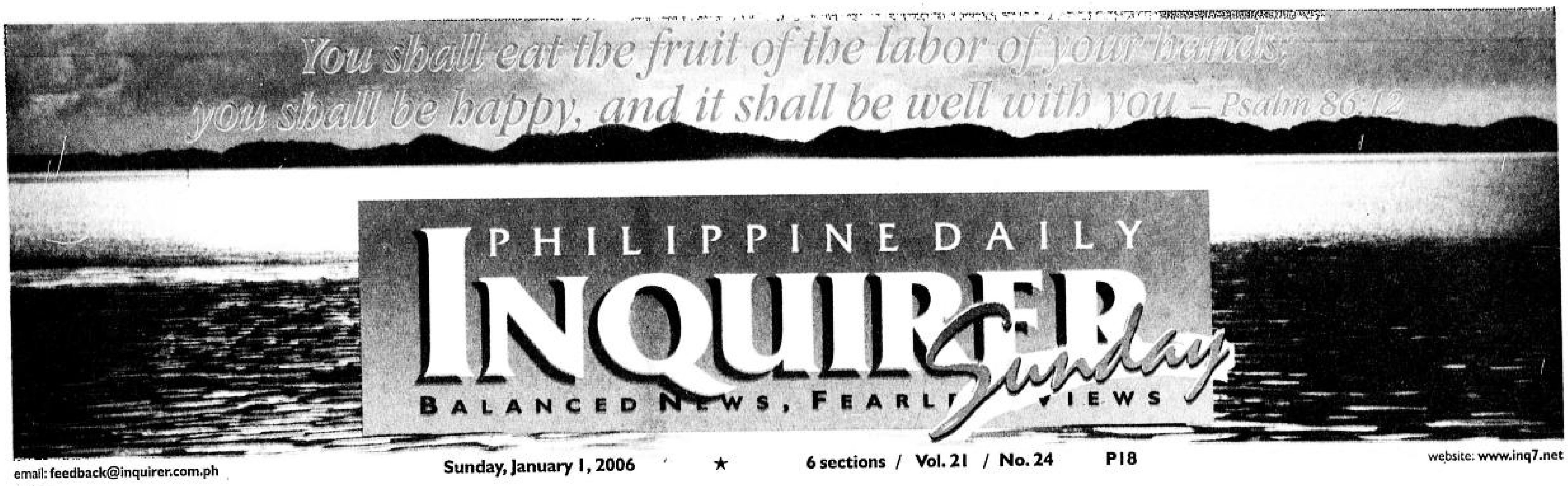


You shall eat the fruit of the labor of your hands; you shall be happy, and it shall be well with you – Psalm 86:12

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER Sunday
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

email: feedback@inquirer.com.ph Sunday, January 1, 2006 ★ 6 sections / Vol. 21 / No. 24 P18 website: www.inq7.net

Piatco judge shot dead

A NEW YEAR'S DAY is a blast from the past—lessons learned, the tears, the laughter, the fears and shadows, the living and the love that has sustained us through 365 days. And there are those blessings about which there are no words to mean gratitude. But it is also a day of the Big Bang with lights galore to mark great rejoicing over thrilling new hopes in the dawning of a New Year. JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN

Chief Justice alarmed: There could be something deeper

By Marlon Ramos, *PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*
and Armand N. Nocum

TWO GUNMEN ON A MOTORCYCLE YESTERDAY shot dead a controversial judge who had authorized the government's takeover of the country's most modern but mothballed airport terminal provided it paid P3 billion to its builder, Piatco.

Investigators have yet to ascertain the motive for the killing but are looking into any link it might have with the airport deal, police Chief Insp. Elpidio Nartatez said.

Judge Henrick Gingoyon, 53, had just left a gym near his residence in Soldier's Hills Village, Barangay Molino, in Bacoor, Cavite, and was walking home when one of the assailants on a Honda motorcycle shot him repeatedly in the back, police said.

The assassins sped off towards Las Piñas. The attack occurred at about 12:45 p.m.

Supreme Court Chief Justice Artemio Panganiban condemned the killing "in the strongest possible terms."

"This is the Piatco judge. We are concerned that there could be something deeper," Panganiban said.

As judge of Pasay City Regional Trial Court Branch 117, Gingoyon ruled that the government could

PIATCO/ A4

Underdogs, wag your tails, 2006 is your year

By Volt Contreras

IF YOU CONSIDER YOURSELF an underdog, there's reason to wag your tail in welcoming 2006.

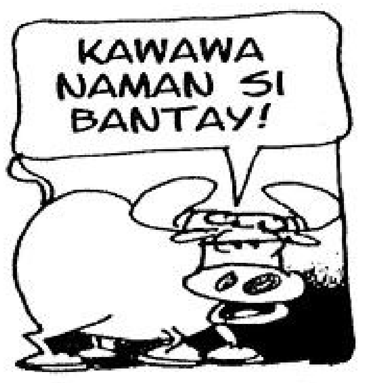
The Year of the Dog will be marked by a sense of justice and relief, when past efforts could finally resolve longtime controversies and may even lead to "successful revolutions," according to some astrological forecasts.

As Filipinos thankfully bid farewell to the year that saw (or almost didn't see) "Garci," some zodiac readings could turn some politicians rabid with excitement or send them whimpering in fear.

"2006 is, in general, a supportive year with a sensible climate of justice, relief, harmony and peace prevailing over the globe, compared to the last few years," according to one prediction posted on the web by Janarrdhana Guptha, feng shui researcher and a clairvoyant Karma reader.

"Controversial issues are given

UNDERDOGS/ A4


KAWAWA NAMAN SI BANTAY!

GMA's dinner talk in Baguio turns to canine cuisine

By Vincent Cabreza
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

BAGUIO CITY—EXPECT 2006, designated as the Year of the Dog in the Chinese calendar, to draw interesting discussions about the morality of eating man's best friend.

Here in the Cordilleras, where culture and lifestyle have long settled that argument, President

GMA'S DINNER/ A4

NEWS BEHIND THE BIG NEWS

Big cheats in Little League exposed

By Armand N. Nocum

THIRTEEN YEARS AFTER I CO-AUthored the investigative report on the Little League Championship fiasco with INQUIRER News Editor Artemio Engracia Jr. and former Mindanao bureau chief Carol Arguillas, people continue to ask me: Why did you do it? Why did you have to be the one to bring our beloved Zamboanga down?

There were even nastier comments: Traitor, snitch, unpatriotic, someone with a "crab mentality."

As the INQUIRER's Zamboanga correspondent, I had grudgingly accepted the assignment to investigate what looked to me then as "lies" that the then sports editor Al Mendoza had been peddling in his column.

Mendoza had suggested that the Little League baseball team from Zamboanga City that won the World Series in Williamsport, Pennsylvania, in 1992 was made up of overaged players. (The age cap for Little League players is 12.)

As a true-blue Zamboangueño, I was determined to prove him wrong.

My initial stories, backed by photocopies of the birth certificates of the six Zamboanga team members, showed that there was no truth to Mendoza's claim. The stories made me a hero in my hometown.

But my editors were not impressed. They told me to dig deeper and go beyond the birth certificates. That's when the lie began to unravel and the trouble started.

My first stop was the school at-

BIG CHEATS/ A4

WORLD SERIES CHAMPIONS

A VICTORY PARADE of the Philippine Little League baseball team in Makati City in September, 1992. PDI PHOTO

At stake: SC independence with GMA's 11 appointees

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

WILL THE SEPARATION OF POWers between the judiciary and the executive be undermined when an overpowering number of Supreme Court justices are handpicked by a sitting President?

This question was raised by Andres Bautista, chair of the Philippine Association of Law Schools, as he expected President Macapagal-Arroyo to raise her tally of appointees to the 15-member high court to 11 justices this year.

"It's possible that before President Arroyo's term ends in 2010, all of the Supreme Court justices would be her appointees," said Bautista , dean of the Far Eastern University Institute of Law.

The Philippine Association of Law Schools, along with the Transparency and Accountability Network, Alternative Law Groups Inc., Association of Law Students of the Philippines, Integrated Bar of the Philippines, and the Lawyers' League for Liberty, launched in November "Supreme Court Appointments Watch."

Bautista said he was not questioning the President's right to choose the justices. "But once appointed the Supreme Court justice should not be beholden to the appointing power but rather, he or she should be true to the Constitution and loyal to the people," the dean said.

The independence of the high court has become a subject of

AT STAKE/ A4

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Eastern Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers. The rest of the country will be partly cloudy to cloudy with isolated rainshowers. The rest of the country will be partly clourainshowers.

SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY CHONA GALANG, PDI RESEARCH/04/07/05

Metro Manila	Cloudy with Rains	Iloilo/Bacolod	Rains
Baguio	Cloudy with Rains	Roxas	Rains
Tuguegarao	Cloudy with Rains	Cebu	Cloudy with Rains
Laoag	Cloudy with Rains	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Cloudy with Rains	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Cloudy with Rains	Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Rains	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

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Second FrontPage

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Ignore political noise, GMA told

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

IGNORE THE POLITICAL FIREWORKS; FOCUS on the economy.

This is the advice of businessmen and money managers to a politically bruised President Macapagal-Arroyo as she moves into her fifth year in Malacañang.

"The opposition will not stop disturbing her, therefore, it is best that she just concentrate on delivering services to the people," said Donald Dee, president of the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry. "When this happens, the political noise will be irrelevant."

The head of the country's biggest business organization added: "There will always be land mines coming her way. She just has to face them and handle them as they come."

Philippine Exporters Confederation president Sergio Ortiz-Luis put it more succinctly: "Work more, talk less."

Ortiz-Luis said President Arroyo's opponents had "thrown everything at her, including the kitchen sink," and he agreed with Malacañang's prognosis that the worst was over for the President.

Noting that Ms Arroyo has been the object of criticism for years, Francis Chua, president of the Federation of Filipino Chinese Chambers of Commerce Inc., said it was time that "we bury the hatchet and rally behind the President so the country can move forward."

"You may not like her personality or her politics, but you can't argue with her success in economics," said Chua.

So far, Dee said, the President "has shown investors and creditors that she will manage the fiscal problems even if it means making very unpopular decisions."

Dee cited how Ms Arroyo managed to keep the budget deficit P20 billion below the target of P180 billion, which she did by keeping expenses low and raising revenue collections, and lobbied successfully for the expansion of the value-added tax to include power and fuel purchase. She accomplished these even if her popularity had been battered by the public's dissatisfaction over the continued surge in oil prices and inflation.

Although the country suffered a credit downgrade in the early part of last year, Chua said investor confidence rallied toward the end of the year as the President ditched her populist programs and stuck to unpopular reforms such pushing for the expanded VAT and rejecting oil price subsidies.

While the government has lowered last year's economic target in the face of high oil prices, the President's decision to increase government spending on infrastructure would sustain the growth momentum by creating more jobs and spurring demand in the construction and property sector.

"The President will continue to be haunted by insinuations of cheating and corruption, and each time these stories come out, it obviously will not be good," said Jose Arnulfo Veloso, chief of treasury at HSBC Philippines.

Veloso said the President should take comfort in the only rating that mattered to businessmen—the sizzling performance of the peso, which has jumped over 6 percent in the last quarter and emerged as the darling of the international currency market.

"This is the only rating that should matter to her because people are voting with their money, by betting that the peso will continue to climb because she would pursue her economic reforms," Veloso said. This is why it is imperative that the President does not blink in her plan to increase the VAT rate to 12 percent next month as she has promised to do to complete the second phase of her fiscal reforms, Veloso said.

For the leading consumer advocate in the country, businessman Raul T. Concepcion, the main concerns that should be resolved not only by the President but all political leaders in the first three months this year are the approval of the 2006 budget, amendments to the Electric Power Industry Reform Act or Epira, which would protect consumers overcharging power utilities, and fine-tuning the VAT to help businesses and consumers cope with high energy costs.

Concepcion said that it was important for Malacañang and Congress to finish these in the first quarter of 2006 so that they could devote the remaining months of the year to tackling the proposed Charter change and plebiscite as well as prepare for the 2007 elections.

Break with old ways, bishops urge everyone

By Jerome Aning

AS FILIPINOS PREPARED TO usher in the New Year, the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines yesterday urged the country's leaders and ordinary citizens alike to "break with the old selfish ways" to achieve reconciliation, national transformation and uplift the lives of the poor.

"Our dream of becoming better persons, our dream of a transforming and transformed nation must wake us up to the realities that we are challenged to change," said the Most Rev. Angel Lagdameo, archbishop of Jaro and CBCP president, in his New Year message.

Lagdameo said the goal of national transformation "must be a shared one" and was something "every concerned Filipino must initiate starting with himself."

"If we want dramatic and revolutionary transformation either in our own persons or in the institution, we need to change our perspectives, our mindset, our frame of reference," the prelate said, adding that there was equally a need to "break with the old selfish ways of thinking and behaving which have been the causes of conflicts."

"We can even change the face of our government, if and only if we change ourselves," he said.

Lagdameo called for "co-responsibility and partnership" in providing the poor with the basic necessities of life—food, shelter, employment, education and health care.

"This is the reconciliation in the concrete, especially with the poor. This is the way to experience the New Year," he said.

For Lingayen-Dagupan Archbishop Oscar Cruz, the year "would be truly new only if there were new public leaders with a new vision and in command of new integrity and respectability."

At the very least, he said, national government officials should have a new sense of mission and strive to regain their credibility and the trust of the citizens.

"Otherwise, the year is but another date yet merely prolonging old realities," Cruz said.

He said that among the major issues still to be resolved were the alleged rigging of the 2004 elections, the "jueteng" payola and various other scandals involving high government officials.

Perennial problems such as graft and corruption, smuggling, poverty, criminality and the brain drain "are not that serious compared to the question of the legitimacy and competence of no less than the holder of the highest office in the country," Cruz said, referring to the "Hello Garci" election fraud scandal.

"[U]nless there is not only a legal but also real closure of this national and fundamental inquiry, this is but an old year merely begging for its continuance. And looking at it as a truly new year with new realities is falsity," he added.

Cruz said that political stability was the foundation of economic progress, not the other way around.

Erap against 'no-el,' says spokesperson

FORMER PRESIDENT JOSEPH Estrada is against scrapping the 2007 elections, his newly reinstated spokesperson Didagen "Digs" Dilangalen told a media forum yesterday.

The deposed President's take on the Consultative Commission's proposal to cancel the midterm elections came in the wake of former President Fidel Ramos's threat to withdraw support from President Macapagal-Arroyo if she failed to categorically state her stand on the issue by the new year.

(See story on Page A3)

"President (Estrada) is in favor of having elections. There's no other way to have political stability than to have elections," Dilangalen said at the weekly Kapihan sa Sulo news forum in Quezon City.

"Even if the people do not eat, they still want to exercise their political right," he added.

Dilangalen said he returned as Estrada's spokesperson in November after Estrada himself asked him to come back. He said Estrada needed him because the former President was not allowed to be interviewed by the media.

Dilangalen left Estrada in September after his wife, Maguindanao Rep. Baisendig Dilangalen, abstained in the impeachment vote against President Macapagal-Arroyo, going against the opposition move to oust her. *Norman Bordadora*

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Bill to make legal split-ups easier filed

By Michael Lim Ubac

A BILL THAT WILL MAKE IT RELATIVELY easier for married couples to obtain a legal separation is slated for debate at the House of Representatives early this year.

Rep. Ma. Amelita Calimbas-Villarosa (Occidental Mindoro) has filed House Bill No. 4948 seeking to expand the grounds for legal separation by a combination of at least five prima facie "indications" of psychological incapacity.

"Excessive gambling, bisexuality, forced sexual intercourse and affliction of a sexually transmissible disease may soon be among the grounds for filing a petition for legal separation," said Villarosa.

The bill will amend the Family Code of the Philippines, particularly Article 36, which contains the psychological incapacity provision, and Article 55, which deals with the grounds for filing such a petition.

Villarosa explained that rather than cater to the popular clamor for divorce to be allowed in the country, a better option would be to amend the Family Code to make it "more responsive to the problems being faced by husbands and wives."

Villarosa said that reasons like "irreconcilable incompatibility" should never be enough grounds to dissolve a marriage, a life-long union sanctioned by Church and State.

Other grounds for legal separation that HB 4948 seeks to include are an attempt by the respondent against the life of the petitioner, his or her descendants and or ascendants, brothers or sisters, whether full or half-blood; unjustifiable refusal of the respondent to provide support to the petitioner and or their common children, and unjustifiable reluctance of the respondent to engage in a decent occupation or means of livelihood.

Taiwan gives ₱1M in new clothes

TAIWAN HAS TURNED OVER SOME P1-MILLION worth of new clothes to the Philippines for the victims of disasters, wards of the Department of Social Welfare and Development and residents of poor municipalities.

Acting Social Welfare Secretary Luwalhati Pablo received the donation last week consisting of 40,000 pieces of assorted clothing from Hsin-Hsing Wu of the Taiwan Economic and Cultural Office in a ceremony at the DSWD Central Office in Quezon City.

The ceremony was dubbed the "Donation of Clothes: Love from Taiwan to the Philippines." The clothes were donated by Taiwanese businessmen based in Japan.

A total, meanwhile, of P4.7 million worth of relief assistance has been shipped to 59,185 families, or 299,964 persons, affected by landslides and flash floods brought on by recent tropical depression "Quedan."

The victims were in Oriental Mindoro, Palawan, Camarines Sur, Sorsogon, Albay, Aklan, Negros Occidental, Iloilo, Capiz and Leyte. *Cynthia D. Balana*

AFP, PNP too busy to bother about FVR

By Norman Bordadora

THE ARMED FORCES OF THE PHILIPPINES and the Philippine National Police are so concerned with keeping the peace over the holidays that both institutions are oblivious of former President Fidel Ramos's veiled threat to withdraw support from President Macapagal-Arroyo if she continued to stay silent on the no-election proposal of the constitutional Consultative Commission.

Col. Tristan Kison, AFP spokesperson, said whether or not Ramos, a former AFP chief of staff and defense secretary, decided to abandon President Arroyo would not affect the military's resolve to follow the chain of command and resist any attempt to bring down the administration.

At the weekly Kapihan sa Sulo news forum in Quezon City yesterday, Kison said that while there remained many unresolved grievances in the military, the members of the institution had learned from past mistakes and were now unlikely to take part in any military adventurism.

"With respect to the opinion of former President Ramos. we repeat that we still maintain that we will toe the line of the chain of command," Kison said.

Kison said he himself had grievances. For one thing, he said, he wanted a salary increase, but there were proper forums to address such issues.

On the other hand, Chief Supt. Leopoldo Bataoil, PNP spokesperson, told the breakfast forum the PNP would face up to any threats against the duly constituted authority.

"We maintain that whatever threat, we will withstand. We will stay united behind the duly constituted authorities. We believe that (threats) will not divert our focus on keeping peace and order," Bataoil said.

It is widely believed Ramos still has clout within the AFP and PNP. He also once headed the police force as commanding general when it was the Philippine Constabulary and then the Integrated National Police.

Ramos before the holidays had said his support for Ms Arroyo was waning and he advised the President to finally break her silence on the ConCom's proposal to do away with the 2007 elections by New Year's Day.

"This is not an ultimatum but the issues here are very crucial. Any further delay will bring us closer to the brink of not only political but also economic crisis. It would turn us into the laughingstock of the international community. This is against the true will of the people," Ramos had said in an interview over ABS-CBN News before Christmas.

"My support is probably waning right now. It is not only hope that I'm losing. As a senior citizen, who has been there (the presidency), my role is like an elder brother to a sister where I may listen, sometimes. But it is the right of the brother to act for the sake of the family," he said.

Ramos's pronouncements prodded opposition Sen. Panfilo Lacson to invite him and fellow Lakas party stalwart Speaker Jose de Venecia to join the ouster calls against the President.

AFP Chief of Staff Gen. Generoso Senga, in a New Year's message referring to recent rumors of coup attempts, reiterated his call to soldiers to stay professional and ignore "the forces of destructive partisanship."

"Now more than ever, the AFP stands at the crossroads of change and reform," Senga said. "I call on the Filipino soldier to be resilient in his adherence to the highest standards of professionalism. I call on him to be unwavering in our defense of the Constitution and the Filipino democratic way of life." *With Dona Z. Pazzibugan*

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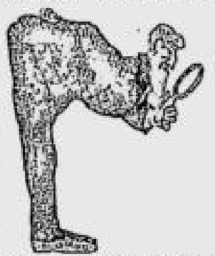

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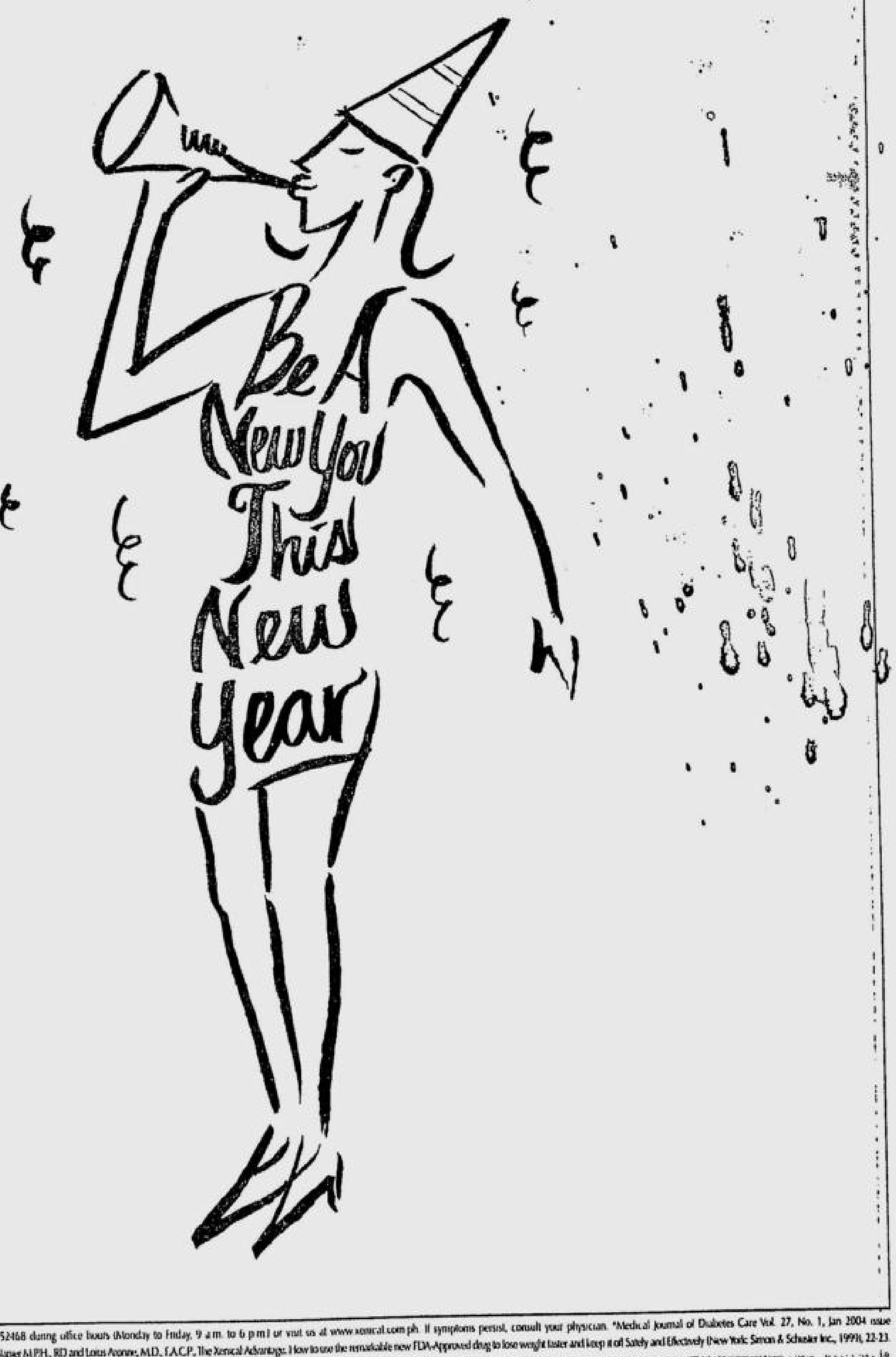
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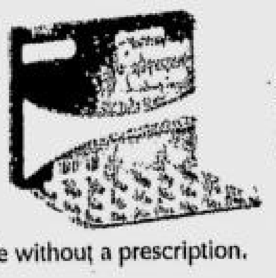

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Piatco judge shot dead in Cavite

From page A1

take over the controversy-plagued Ninoy Aquino International Airport terminal III so long as the government paid P3 billion to the Philippine International Air Terminals Co. (Piatco), a consortium that includes the German airport operator Fraport AG.

The gym where Gingoyon had worked out was a few meters away from his residence, said Nartatez, Bacoor's deputy police chief.

Gingoyon suffered four gunshot wounds in his body and was declared dead on arrival at the Imus General Hospital.

Investigators recovered four empty shells from a .45-cal. pistol.

'Get to the bottom'

Officer on case Eric Malinao told the INQUIRER: "One of the victim's children told us that his father's killing could be linked to the Piatco case."

Said intelligence officer Supt. Rodel Sermonia: "We're still studying all the cases that the victim handled in recent months and Piatco could be one of them."

"We urge the law enforcement authorities to immediately get to the bottom of the crime and apprehend the perpetrators," Panganiban said in a statement released by the high court's chief information officer, Ismael Khan Jr.

Khan said the Chief Justice wanted authorities to "redouble their efforts to also solve" the cases of other murdered judges.

Asked whether the issue had anything to do with the killing, Khan replied: "We don't know, that is why we want the authorities to get to the bottom of this."

Gingoyon upheld

The high court recently upheld with modification the Jan. 4, 2005, order of Gingoyon allowing Piatco to get over $62 million in government deposits.

"Wherefore, the petition is granted in part with respect to the orders dated 4 January 2005 and 10 January 2005 of the lower court," the high court said in a 63-page decision penned by Associate Justice Dante Tinga.

Panganiban, retired Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr., Associate Justices Renato Corona and Conchita Carpio Morales dissented from the ruling.

In December 2004, Gingoyon's court issued a writ of possession in favor of the government but later allowed the release to Piatco of a $62 million deposit as a requirement for the takeover of Naia 3.

Elevated to Supreme Court

The government questioned the ruling before the high court, arguing it was only willing to pay $9 million less than what the lower court awarded to Piatco.

On Jan. 14, 2005, the high court issued a temporary restraining order stopping the implementation of Gingoyon's ruling in favor of Piatco.

In its Dec. 19 decision, the court lifted the TRO after finding no grave abuse of discretion on the part of the RTC to warrant the voiding of its assailed orders, although the high court said the rulings should be modified to conform with the law.

"The implementation of the Writ of Possession ... is held in abeyance, pending payment by petitioners to Piatco of the amount of P3,002,125,000, representing the proferred value of the Naia 3 facilities," the Supreme Court said.

Just compensation

It said that upon the effectivity of the writ of possession, the government was authorized to start implementation of the Naia 3 project "by performing acts that are essential to the operation" of the project.

"RTC Branch 117 is hereby directed, within 60 days from finality of this decision, to determine the just compensation to be paid to Piatco by the government," the high tribunal said.

He handled sensational cases

By Maricar Tolosa
PDI Research

A MAN WHO LIVED AN APPARently checkered life, Henrick F. Gingoyon had been involved in high profile cases in his career as an activist lawyer and judge.

- Jan. 4, 2005—He ruled that Piatco can get a deposit of $62.3 million.
- June 27, 2002—He ordered the arrest of lawyer Charito Planas of Nayong Pilipino, for allegedly defying a temporary restraining order barring the closure of the theme park. Planas posted bail and the charges were later dropped.
- July 2002—He sentenced Indonesian Agus Dwikarna, said to have links to terror leader Fathur Rohman al-Ghozi, to up to 17 years in prison for illegal possession of firearms.
- August 1998—He was found inside a suspected Pasay sex den raided by the National Bureau of Investigation. He later said he was not a customer but was at the place as a visitor after a friend invited him.
- Prior to being named Pasay City judge, Gingoyon was state prosecutor for 10 years.
- Among the sensational cases he handled as a prosecutor were the bribery case involving ex-Gen. Dictador Alqueza, the kidnap-slaying of former IBP president Eugene Tan and the shooting of Alvin Vinculado.
- Before entering government service, Gingoyon was counsel for leftist groups, such as the Bagong Alyansang Makabayan and the Kilusang Mayo Uno, in his native Cebu City. He also served as Cebu's secretary general for the Anti-Bases Coalition.

At stake: SC independence with GMA's 11 appointees

From page A1

public scrutiny because the institution has become "suspect" with the unusually high number of Arroyo appointees, Bautista said.

"This can only be cured if the people she appoints will be true to their oath," he said.

The independence of the Supreme Court is expected to be tested if it is forced to decide on Ms Arroyo's preference to change the Constitution and shift to a parliamentary form of government.

Like-minded appointees

Packing the high court with Arroyo appointees is reminiscent of US President Franklin Delano Roosevelt who, at one point in his four elected terms, had appointed all of the 9-member US Supreme Court.

Bautista said Roosevelt appointed "like-minded" individuals to the Supreme Court to ensure that his New Deal program aimed at towing the US economy out of depression would be implemented without delay.

"They were like-minded in the sense that Roosevelt's appointees shared his philosophy that the government needed to be proactive. But in the Philippines, alliances here are not based on philosophy but on loyalty to the appointing person," Bautista said.

Before former Supreme Court Chief Justice Hilario Davide retired on Dec. 20, there were already nine Arroyo-appointed justices—Antonio Carpio, Ma. Alicia Austria-Martinez, Renato Corona, Conchita Carpio-Morales, Adolfo Azcuna, Dante Tinga, Cancio Garcia, Romeo Callejo Sr., and Minita Chico-Nazario.

12 justices in '07

By next year, the President would have 12 justices appointed following her designation of Justice Artemio Panganiban (an appointee of former President Fidel V. Ramos) as the new chief justice and her choice for the vacant 15th seat.

Only four justices have been appointed by past presidents—Reynato Puno and Leonardo Quisumbing (Ramos) and Consuelo Ynares-Santiago and Angelina Sandoval Gutierrez (former President Joseph Estrada).

Puno, who is rumored to be next in line to Panganiban who will retire next year, will reach the mandatory retirement age of 70 on May 17, 2010. Sandoval-Gutierrez will retire in 2008, and Quisumbing and Ynares-Santiago in 2009.

The watch urges the public to submit positive or negative information on high court nominees to ensure greater transparency and to encourage broader public participation.

Big cheats in Little League exposed

From page A1

tended by the players from my hometown who came to be known as the Zamboanga Six.

We soon discovered that Jemar Alfaro, Ignacio Ramacho, Marlon Pantaleon and Expedito Alvarez were not enrolled at the Culianan Elementary School as claimed by league officials, including the school principal.

They were actually sophomores at the Culianan National High School.

It was also revealed that the team's captain, Allan Bitun, was actually studying at the National High School West while the sixth player, Ricardo Marcos, was a student at the Zamboanga National High School-Main.

When I went back to the Culianan Elementary School, its officials refused to show me the boys' records, saying they could not be found.

It was around this time that the threats and warnings from team officials and the boys' parents began.

Someone slashed the tires and the seat of my motorcycle which was parked outside the school.

Admits to violation

In the course of my research, the team's coach Eduardo Toribio admitted that Little League Philippines had violated the Little League International's strict rules on "district" representation.

That revelation forced the hand of the country's Little League administrator, who wrote the mother organization admitting to the violation.

(Little League International would soon disqualify the Zamboanga team and award the championship to the losing finalist, Long Beach of California. The basis for the disqualification was the admission by the local Little League administrator that only six players from the original Zamboanga lineup had gone on to play in the World Series. The eight other players had come from Luzon. The sanction had nothing to do with the players' ages or Mendoza's allegations and the INQUIRER's subsequent investigation.)

Pressure began to mount for the INQUIRER to prove the veracity of its stories. Initially, we faced a blank wall in a city bent on keeping its dark secret. But then, it was just a matter of time before things began to unravel and greed blew the lid off what the city was trying to hide.

The lure of the P1-million donation from then President Fidel V. Ramos, the $3,000 that a wealthy Zamboangueño gave the players in the US and promises of scholarships and advertising contracts proved the undoing of the web of deceit that the Little League officials had foisted on the country and the world.

Borrowed identities

No one seemed to be satisfied with his share of the "loot." Not the parents of the six Zamboanga players and certainly not the parents of the children whose identities were "borrowed" and who now felt they had been shortchanged.

So when we began the research for the six-part series that appeared in the INQUIRER in November 1992, we stepped into a mine that was ready to explode with shocking revelations.

Much of my information came from Josefina Florentino, 52, and her son, Elvin, the city's best catcher and one of the players who did not get to go to the US because some of the Zamboanga team members were replaced by the selection from Luzon, a violation of district representation.

Florentino said her son had been discarded like a "rag." She said her son became envious of the six Zamboanga players who had bought BMX bikes with their victory money.

The father of the real Ignacio Ramacho complained that they were given only P100, a T-shirt and a pair of shoes instead of the P5,000 promised for the use of his son's identity.

Other parents, neighbors, teachers, classmates, teammates and coaches also had their stories of betrayal and deception.

Overaged hi-school studes

Thus, we managed to establish that the six Zamboanga players were not who they claimed to be but were in fact overaged high school students. They had assumed the identities of real kids who were 12 years old and under.

The boy who assumed the name Allan Bitun, the captain and skipper of the team, was actually Juniper Pinero, a 14-year-old high school sophomore. Jemar Alfaro was really 16-year-old Alvin Alfaro, a cousin.

Ignacio Ramacho was actually Ernesto Vinarao, 13; Marlon Pantaleon was really Melvin Pantaleon, 14, his elder brother; Expedito Alvarez was Gilbert Alvarez, 15, and Ricardo Marcos was actually Rodel Marcos, 14.

Carol Arguillas tracked down earlier Little League "stars" who had also been made to assume the identifies of younger boys. She discovered that after their stars had faded after lifelong identity crises, the Little League "greats" were leading miserable lives.

'Golden Boy'

One such player was buried under the name "Golden Boy," the moniker he made famous in baseball. His tomb bears no other name, no date of birth or of death. Officially his name was Cipriano Alvarez Jr.—some say he was actually Luis Alvarez. But his supposed father, Cipriano Alvarez, insisted he did not have a junior. So when he died in a vehicular accident in 1985 nobody really cared—he was simply "Golden Boy."

Another tragic story was that of Edgardo Alvarez (no relation to "Golden Boy") who grew up using the name Gil Manuel. Two years after playing tot baseball for the country in San Diego, California, as the 12-year-old Manuel, he enlisted in the Navy under his real name (Alvarez) and suited up to play baseball in the AFP Olympics.

The constabulary coach, baseball great Filomeno Codiñera, recognized him as Gil Manuel. He should know, Codiñera said, having coached the tot baseball team where Manuel was one of his stars.

Tragic end

It ended Alvarez-Manuel's baseball career. When Arguillas found him in Zamboanga seven years later, he was working as a ditch digger. The real Gil Manuel was no better off as a *kangkong* gatherer.

The six-part INQUIRER series on the Little League fiasco began on Nov. 7, 1992, long after Zamboanga had been disqualified as world champion.

Midway through the series, the Senate committee on youth and sports development had been about to release its findings that Zamboanga's disqualification was "arbitrary, whimsical and capricious." The committee had to revise its report.

Little League International appointed a new administrator in the Philippines, which has since failed to qualify a team beyond the Far East Little League Series.

Long Beach, which was listed in the record books as having won 6-0 over the Philippines' Zamboanga team in the 1992 Little League World Series championship, went on to defend the title the next year.

While age-cheating and name-switching continue in age-group sports competitions here and abroad, Little League baseball in the Philippines has since been untainted by any scandal.

Underdogs, wag your tails, 2006 is your year

From page A1

their due, revolutions are successful, politics are liberal, and social oppression is opposed," said Susan Levitt, a San Francisco-based tarot card reader, astrologer and feng shui consultant.

It won't be a dog-eat-dog world, after all, but "a time of fairness and equality," Levitt added. "Integrity and honesty are the values that lead to success under the Dog's watchful and just influence."

Even though global turmoil and instability will continue, the scale of civil wars and international conflicts will come down, Guptha said.

Or year of compromises?

The guru also had a message relevant to the on-and-off peace negotiations between the government and the Moro and communist rebels: "Initiatives of the previous years will lead to peace talks which in turn could result in amicable settlements."

Chinese astrology marks 2006 as, more precisely, the year of the "Fire Dog."

Officially, the Fire Dog isn't unleashed until the next Chinese New Year which begins this Jan. 29. It reigns till Feb. 17, 2007.

The last Dog year was 1994, and before it 1910, 1922, 1934, 1946, 1958, 1970, and 1982.

In Guptha's forecast, the good feng shui configurations of 2006 are something to bark about.

Taming epidemics

"The Year of the Dog symbolizes Fire and Earth," he explained. "In the productive cycle of feng shui, Fire gives birth to Earth. So the basic elemental relationship is positive and quite strong."

He sees a "huge positive surge" toward addressing world problems, like global warming and environmental protection.

"Tackling epidemics, resource sharing, national and international cooperation will become the trend of the year," he said, to a point in which mankind would increasingly embrace the notion of an "inspiring New World Order."

Less marital breakups

Moderate to fast economic recovery will be seen and a general improvement in living conditions may be witnessed, Guptha added.

A sincere attempt for urban renewal will be started. The underprivileged will get to have a lot of attention.

On a personal level, this year will also see more marriages and a lot less breakups than in previous years.

"Faith and commitments will be rewarded whereas deviousness and treachery will be punished," he wrote. "Marital bliss will in general, be quietly satisfying."

GMA's dinner talk in Baguio turns to canine cuisine

From page A1

Macapagal-Arroyo finally found the chance to ask about dog meat during a dinner she hosted on Tuesday at The Mansion, her official residence in Baguio City.

Ms Arroyo did not ask to be served dog meat nor did she pass judgment on people who eat dog meat dishes.

Streak for exotic food

But conversation at dinner did reveal the First Family's adventurous streak—they enjoy exotic food.

Ms Arroyo traces her roots to Pampanga, equally known for its fine culinary tradition and line of exotic dishes made from the most unusual ingredients, among them frogs (*tugak*), mole crickets (*kamaru*), snakes, field rats and monitor lizards (*bayawak*).

"Dog meat keeps you warm, does it not?" Ms Arroyo said, turning to Baguio Mayor Braulio Yaranon.

She said she was no stranger to unusual cuisine, relating how her Pampanga childhood had introduced her to toasted or grilled *balang* (locust).

When the President visits Pampanga, she is usually served the local exotic cuisine, including adobong kamaru and bayawak, and stuffed tugak.

She is also known for her fondness for *buro* (fermented rice with fish and shrimp) which she uses as a dip for fresh vegetables and *burong talangka* (salted fresh crablets).

Ms Arroyo's interest was picked by Yaranon's talk of grilled fruit bats with meter-wide wingspans, a delicacy of La Union province.

But she said her knowledge of dog meat was rudimentary. Dog meat is popular because it keeps the human temperature high in cold weather, she told her dinner companions which included Yaranon, First Gentleman Jose Miguel "Mike" Arroyo, Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye and four local reporters.

Ms Arroyo's observations about the attractions of dog meat were characteristic of lowlanders, said photographer Tommy Hafalla, who has made a career of documenting ancient Cordillera rituals.

"Many come [to Baguio] to eat dog because they were told it has chemical properties that keep the eater warm in a cold climate," Hafalla said in a phone interview.

Not on menu

Dog meat is served as a spicy stew or or sold in grilled slabs in food stalls in Baguio and Benguet, but is rarely put on the menu of the establishments that serve it.

Republic Act No. 8485, or the Animal Welfare Act of 1998, makes it a crime to sell dog meat, although it makes an exception of the Cordillera communities that use dogs as ritual offerings.

Section 6 of RA 8485 allows the slaughter of dogs "when it is done as part of the religious rituals of an established religion or sect or a ritual required by tribal or ethnic custom of indigenous cultural communities."

But animal rights activists are seeking to have that provision deleted, according to one of Ms Arroyo's dinner guests, who is a dog breeder.

He told the President that Baguio's dog meat trade was being closely monitored by authorities because of pressure from foreign animal rights groups.

Animal rights groups

A London-based animal rights group actually hired anthropologists in 2001 to prove that Benguet was disqualified from serving dog meat because its indigenous rituals did not reveal any evidence of it having a "dog culture," according to one of the group's former employees.

The same group hires agents to spy on eateries serving dog meat so the group and animal control officials to track down their suppliers.

Police has intercepted Baguio-bound jeepneys and trucks from Southern Luzon that transport dogs packed into small cages.

But Hafalla maintains that all Cordillera tribes have remnants of a dog culture, even if rituals involving dogs are rarely performed.

Dog sacrifices are more common in Sagada and other Mt. Province villages that perform the *daw-es*, a cleansing ritual that requires the sacrifice of a black dog to ward off an *anito* (ancestral spirit) that is out to do harm. *With a report from Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

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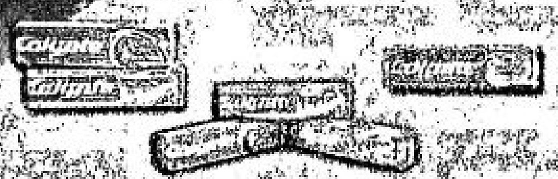
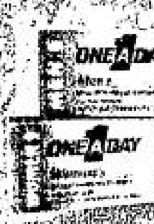
SENSODYNE TP FRSHMNT 120G	216.00	205.00
SENSODYNE TP ORIG 100G	176.50	[illegible]



	Reg Price	PAY ONLY
COLGATE FCONFI CC P-ICE 50ML	33.50	31.75
COLGATE FCONFI CC P-ICE 100ML	53.50	50.75
COLGATE FCONFI CC P-ICE 150ML	78.00	74.00
COLGATE FCONFI CC 8FRSH 50ML	33.50	31.75
COLGATE FCONFI CC 8FRSH 100ML	53.50	50.75
COLGATE FCONFI CC 8FRSH 150ML	78.00	74.00
COLGATE GREAT REG FLVR 50ML	30.50	[illegible]
COLGATE GREAT REG FLVR 100ML	46.50	[illegible]
COLGATE CMNT FLVR 100ML	46.50	[illegible]
COLGATE CMNT FLVR 50ML	30.50	[illegible]
COLGATE GEL FRSH CONFI 50ML	30.50	[illegible]
COLGATE GEL FRSH CONFI 100ML	48.50	[illegible]

Multivitamins w/minerals

No Adverse Reaction



	Reg Price	PAY ONLY
ONE-A-DAY MENS FORMULA	12.75	12.00
ONE-A-DAY WOMENS FORMULA	12.75	12.00

Multivitamins w/minerals

No Adverse Reaction

	Reg Price	PAY ONLY
IMMUVIT CAP	22.75	21.50

Multivitamins w/minerals

No Adverse Reaction

	Reg Price	PAY ONLY
SELVON-C SYR 120ML	118.00	112.00

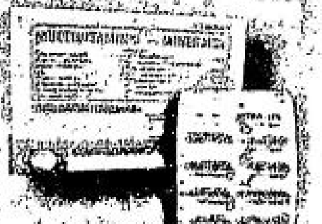
Calcium w/Vitamins

Adverse Reaction: Constipation

	Reg Price	PAY ONLY
CALCI-AID CAP 500MG 30	[illegible]	129.00
CALCI-AID CAP 500MG	[illegible]	[illegible]

Multivitamins w/minerals

No Adverse Reaction



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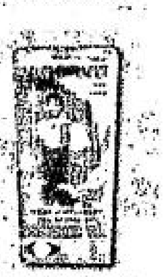
BIOLATON CAP	[illegible]	[illegible]

Multivitamins w/minerals

No Adverse Reaction



	Reg Price	PAY ONLY
VIGORVIT SYR 120ML	[illegible]	117.00

	Reg Price	PAY ONLY
THERAH VCO BNANA 250ML	175.00	166.25
THERAH VCO JACKFRT 250ML	175.00	166.25
THERAH VCO SWTCORN 250ML	175.00	166.25

Multivitamins w/minerals

No Adverse Reaction

[illegible]

Reg Price	PAY ONLY
[illegible]	[illegible]

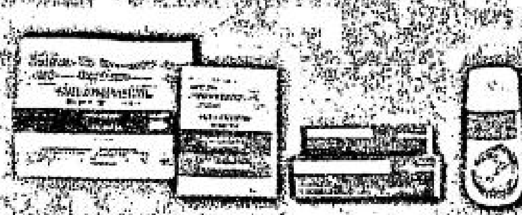
[illegible] complications in GIT epistaxis

	Reg. Price	PAY ONLY
COR-30 TABS	1.30	[illegible]

Ampalaya (Momordica Charantia)

No Adverse Reaction

	Reg Price	PAY ONLY
ABS BITTER HERBS CAP 350MG	12.00	[illegible]



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SALONPAS GEL PTCH 2	65.50	61.00
SALONPAS GEL 15G	52.50	48.25
SALONPAS GEL 30G	83.25	78.50
SALONPAS LINIMENT 30ML	36.00	32.25
SALONPAS 10 SHTS	32.25	29.50
SALONPAS 10SHTS+2SHTS FREE	32.25	29.50

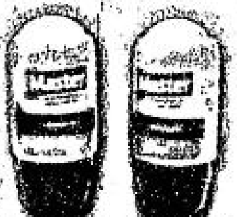
Extr. Cepae/ Hepa. Sod. Allantoin

[illegible]

	Reg Price	PAY ONLY
CONTRACTUBEX GEL 10G	340.00	[illegible]
CONTRACTUBEX GEL 20G	650.00	[illegible]

	Reg Price	PAY ONLY
DR KAUFM IR MED SOAP 80G	22.75	21.50
DR KAUFM SULFUR MED SOAP 80G	22.75	21.50
DR KAUFM XPS MED SOAP 80G	22.75	21.50

	Reg Price	PAY ONLY
MASTER DEO R ON BL 40ML	[illegible]	[illegible]
MASTER DEO R ON FRSHWAT 40ML	[illegible]	[illegible]



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ESKINOL CLSSC [illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
ESKINOL CLSSC WHTNG [illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
ESKINOL CLSSC WHTNG CLR 225ML	[illegible]	[illegible]
ESKINOL CLSSC WC [illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
ESKINOL CLSSC WHTNG [illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
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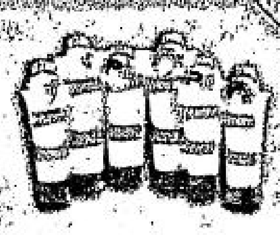
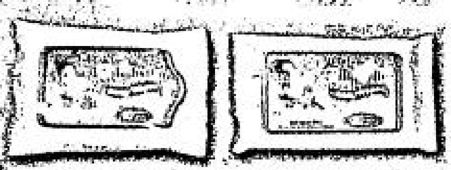


	Reg Price	PAY ONLY
MASTER GEL STRONG 50ML	30.25	28.75
MASTER GEL STRONG 100ML	43.50	[illegible]
MASTER GEL UL 50ML	31.25	[illegible]
MASTER GEL UL 100ML	42.50	[illegible]
MASTER GEL WETLOOK 50ML	28.00	[illegible]
MASTER GEL WETLOOK 100ML	[illegible]	[illegible]



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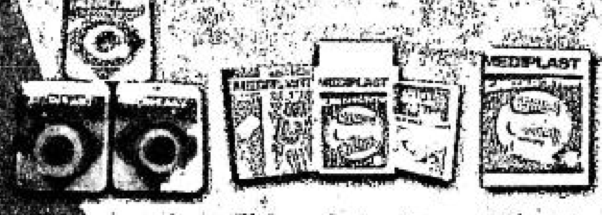
BABYFLO BB WIPES USE X 30	75.00	[illegible]
BABYFLO BB WIPES USE X 80	[illegible]	[illegible]
BABYFLO BB WIPES USE X 10	[illegible]	[illegible]



	Reg Price	PAY ONLY
MEDIPLAST ASST STRIP 20	[illegible]	[illegible]
MEDIPLAST BANTAM STRIPS	[illegible]	[illegible]
MEDIPLAST CHECKER STRIPS 20	[illegible]	[illegible]
MEDIPLAST CHECKER STRIPS 10	[illegible]	[illegible]
MEDIPLAST STANDARD 12	[illegible]	[illegible]
MEDIPLAST STANDARD	[illegible]	[illegible]
MEDIPLAST PTAPE 1.25CMX5M	[illegible]	[illegible]
MEDIPLAST PTAPE 1.25CMX9.1M	[illegible]	[illegible]
MEDIPLAST PTAPE 2.5CMX5M	[illegible]	[illegible]

	Reg Price	PAY ONLY
LOVE MY HONEY [illegible]	105.00	[illegible]
LOVE MY HONEY [illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
LOVE MY HONEY [illegible]	230.00	[illegible]

	Reg Price	PAY ONLY
CLEENE BT SSOFT 220 [illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
CLEENE BT SSOFT 300 [illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
CLEENE BT SSOFT 220 [illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
CLEENE BT SSOFT 300 [illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
CLEENE BT SSOFT 220 [illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
CLEENE BT SSOFT 300 [illegible]	100.00	[illegible]

Clotrimazole

Adverse Reaction: Skin irritation (rare)

	Reg Price	PAY ONLY
CANESTEN CR 1PC 5G	[illegible]	[illegible]
CANESTEN CR 1PC 5G	[illegible]	[illegible]
CANESTEN CR 1PC 10G	96.00	[illegible]

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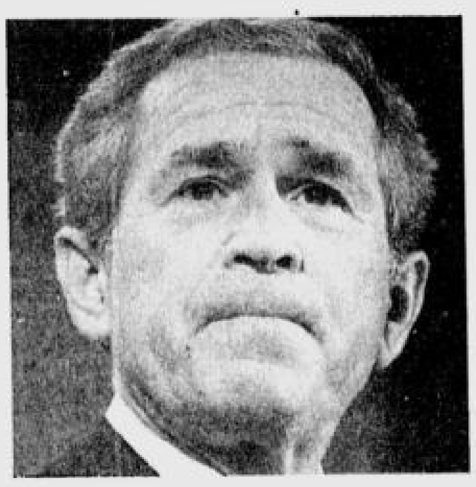
The WORLD

Editor Luverne B. Gueco

Bush extends antiterror law

CRAWFORD, TEXAS—PRESIDENT George W. Bush on Friday signed legislation extending key provisions of the antiterrorism USA Patriot Act until Feb. 3 and a bill that bans cruel and inhumane treatment of prisoners, despite initial resistance to both measures.


BUSH

The United States has been criticized for its handling of prisoners after the abuse scandal at the Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq, harsh interrogations at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, and reports of secret CIA prisons overseas for terrorism suspects.

The provision on the treatment of detainees was included in a defense spending bill. Bush had initially threatened to veto legislation that contained that measure, but backed off after congressional votes showed overwhelming support for the amendment pushed by Sen. John McCain, an Arizona Republican who was a former prisoner of war in the Vietnam conflict.

"US law and policy already prohibit torture," Bush said in a statement. "Our policy has also been not to use cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment, at home or abroad. This legislation now makes that a matter of statute for practices abroad." In a concession to the White House, the bill curbs the ability of inmates at Guantanamo to challenge their detention in federal court.

"I also appreciate the legislation's elimination of the hundreds of claims brought by terrorists at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, that challenge many different aspects of their detention and that are now pending in our courts," Bush said.

On the Patriot Act, Bush had strongly pushed for a permanent renewal, but Congress passed a temporary extension to allow more time to consider civil liberties protections.

The Patriot Act was a response to the Sept. 11 attacks and expanded the authority of the federal government to conduct secret searches, obtain private records and intercept telephone calls, among other activities, to track down suspected terror cells.

"Our law enforcement community needs this, he's not satisfied with a one-month extension. But we've got to get that in place, and we've got to work with them to get it permanently re-extended," said White House spokesperson Trent Duffy.

The debate over whether some of the provisions infringe too much on civil liberties became more heated after the revelation that Bush authorized the National Security Agency to conduct a domestic eavesdropping operation on Americans with suspected ties to terrorism without seeking court approval.

Among the civil protections being debated in Congress are rules for "roving" wiretaps of suspects who use multiple telephones and court orders for records for businesses, libraries, bookstores and personal medical records.

The Patriot Act extension and defense spending legislation were among several bills signed into law by Bush while on vacation at his Texas ranch. The $453.3 billion defense spending bill included $50 billion for military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan until Congress acts on another emergency war supplemental next year. *Reuters*

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10 YEARS AFTER

Gulf war syndrome persists

CHICAGO—"GULF WAR SYNDROME," a debilitating multi-symptom affliction identified in many soldiers after the 1991 conflict in Kuwait, is likely to strike US troops fighting in Iraq, a new study shows.

The syndrome, which proved hard to diagnose because it manifested itself in many different afflictions, remained widespread among US troops 10 years after the Gulf War ended, according to the study, lead-authored by Melvin Blanchard, assistant professor of medicine at Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis, Missouri. Blanchard's study will be published in January in the American Journal of Epidemiology.

A comprehensive medical evaluation of some 2,189 Gulf War veterans between 1999 and 2001 found that 28.9 percent of those deployed suffered from the affliction a decade after the war. The rate for soldiers not deployed to the Gulf War was more than half that, and usually not as severe.

The study's results suggest that soldiers fighting in Iraq today—many of whose tours of duty are much longer than those in the previous war—are likely to experience Gulf War syndrome as well.

"It's not unique to the Gulf," Blanchard told AFP. "It probably means there is a baseline in the (deployed) population, and the non-deployed reflect what happens in the general population. The military is trying to take better care of the soldiers' mental health in the field and that may have some bearing on the outcome, but I still expect to see CMI in those soldiers who are in Iraq now when they return," Blanchard said.

The long-term impacts could be severe, the study said, because those suffering from the syndrome were twice as likely to experience heart attacks, diabetes and liver disease. Gulf War syndrome is the popular name for chronic multisymptom illness complex, or CMI. It was first identified by the Centers for Disease Control in 1994 after thousands of returning troops complained of unexplained symptoms.

It is defined as having symptoms that fall into two of the three following groupings for more than six months: fatigue, mood and cognitive symptoms and musculoskeletal pain. *AFP*

US secret wiretap leak probed

WASHINGTON—THE US JUSTICE Department has opened a probe into the leaking of classified information which revealed that President George W. Bush had authorized a secret government wiretap program, an official source said Friday.

"We have opened an investigation into the unauthorized disclosure of classified information related to the NSA (National Security Agency)," said a Justice Department official who requested anonymity.

The probe was opened after Bush earlier this month urged a "full investigation" into who leaked information about the secret government wiretap program. It is unknown who was behind the leak revealing the secret program, although media reports have suggested that some agents were concerned about the program's legality.

The president's call for a probe came after US media reported that Bush had authorized the NSA to engage in an operation to monitor massive volumes of telephone and Internet communications.

However, the White House said Friday it had no role in the Justice Department's decision to investigate the leak.

"The Justice Department undertook this action on its own, which is the way it should be," White House spokesperson Trent Duffy told reporters in Crawford, Texas, where Bush was enjoying a year-end vacation on his ranch.

But he added: "The White House was informed of the decision, as was the president." Domestic spying is a sensitive issue for many Americans who are proud of their civil liberties. Similar revelations about domestic spying led to legislation in the 1970s that allows wiretapping but requires government agencies to obtain a special court warrant for it.

But Bush and his aides have stressed that the eavesdropping order was limited to those suspected of ties to al-Qaida, as part of the administration's "war on terror." Rights groups have criticized the White House about the NSA program, which was initiated on a secret 2002 order from Bush. *AFP*

WORLDBRIEFS

3 British hostages freed

GAZA—A 25-year-old British human rights worker and her parents were freed in the Gaza Strip on Friday by Palestinian gunmen who kidnapped them two days earlier. A previously unknown group calling itself Brigades of the Mujahideen-Jerusalem said it seized Kate Burton, her father Hugh and mother Helen to demand British and European pressure on Israel and freed them as a gesture of goodwill. The Burtons passed through Gaza City briefly before being whisked away towards Israel in diplomatic cars with darkened windows. "They are well and in good spirits. They are currently with officials from our Consulate General in Jerusalem," said a statement from the British Foreign Office. "She was not hurt, her parents were okay and she plans to visit Gaza next week," said Adnan Hajjar, a colleague of Burton's.

Reuters

Indonesian blast kills 6

PALU, Indonesia—A bomb blast rocked a crowded Christian market selling pork ahead of New Year celebrations in eastern Indonesia on Saturday, killing six people and wounding 45, police said. The blast in Palu, capital of Central Sulawesi province, comes amid warnings of militant violence during the Christmas and New Year season in Indonesia. Pork is forbidden to Muslims, but eastern Indonesia has large pockets of Christians. Bystanders carried bloodied shoppers from the makeshift market to a road, putting them in passing cars to be taken to the hospital. One man screamed as he held up his bloodied arms. "It was a homemade bomb. It was full of nails," said national police spokesperson, Maj. Gen. Paulus Purwoko.

Reuters

25 Sudan refugees killed

CAIRO—The death toll among Sudanese refugees during violent clashes with Egyptian police has risen to 25, judicial sources said Saturday. The refugees died after several thousand riot police wielding batons and water cannon on Friday forcibly removed hundreds of Sudanese who had been staging a protest outside UN offices in Cairo for three months. A judicial inquiry has been opened into the deadly violence. Investigators went to a Cairo morgue where they found the bodies of 25 victims from the clashes, judicial sources told AFP.

AFP

Florida teen heads for US after risky Iraq adventure

BAGHDAD—A 16-YEAR-OLD from Florida who traveled to one of the world's most dangerous places without telling his parents left Baghdad on Friday to begin his journey home, the US Embassy said, drawing to a close an adventure that could have cost him his life.

HASSAN

The mother of Farris Hassan, the prep school junior whom US officials took custody of in Baghdad this week, said she was "grateful" he was headed back. Shatha Atiya said she already knew what her first words would be to her son.

"'Thank God you're alive,' then I'll collapse for a few hours and then sit down and have a long discussion about his consequences," she said in Fort Lauderdale.

Consul General Richard B. Hermann said Friday that Hassan "safely departed Baghdad." He reiterated warnings by the State Department and embassy against traveling to Iraq. Forty American citizens have been kidnapped since the war started in March 2003, of whom 10 have been killed, a US official said. About 15 remain missing.

"This young American is now on his way back home to his family in the United States," Hermann said.

Hassan spoke to The Associated Press early Friday, several hours before the embassy announcement, and he was still under the impression that he would be following his personal travel itinerary, which had him leaving the country by himself on Sunday. He hadn't even been aware that the story of his perilous travels was published around the world—or that his mother was being interviewed on television.

"I don't have any Internet access here in the Green Zone, so I have no idea what's going on," he said.

A military officer accompanying him, who did not identify himself, said it was his task to get Hassan "safe and sound to the United States."

The embassy refused to release any further details about his travel, and it wasn't known when he would arrive home in Florida. Hassan has three older siblings who are all enrolled at universities. A brother, 23-year-old Hayder Hassan, called the trip "absolutely mind-boggling." "I just want him back," he said.

Farris Hassan, who attends Pine Crest School, an academy of about 700 students in Fort Lauderdale, left the United States on Dec. 11 and traveled to Kuwait, where he thought he could take a taxi into Baghdad and witness the Dec. 15 parliamentary elections.

A devoted history student, Hassan had recently taken a course in "immersion journalism" and read the works of journalists like John McPhee, a writer who lives the life of his subject in order to better understand it. He said he wanted to understand better what Iraqis are living through. *AP*

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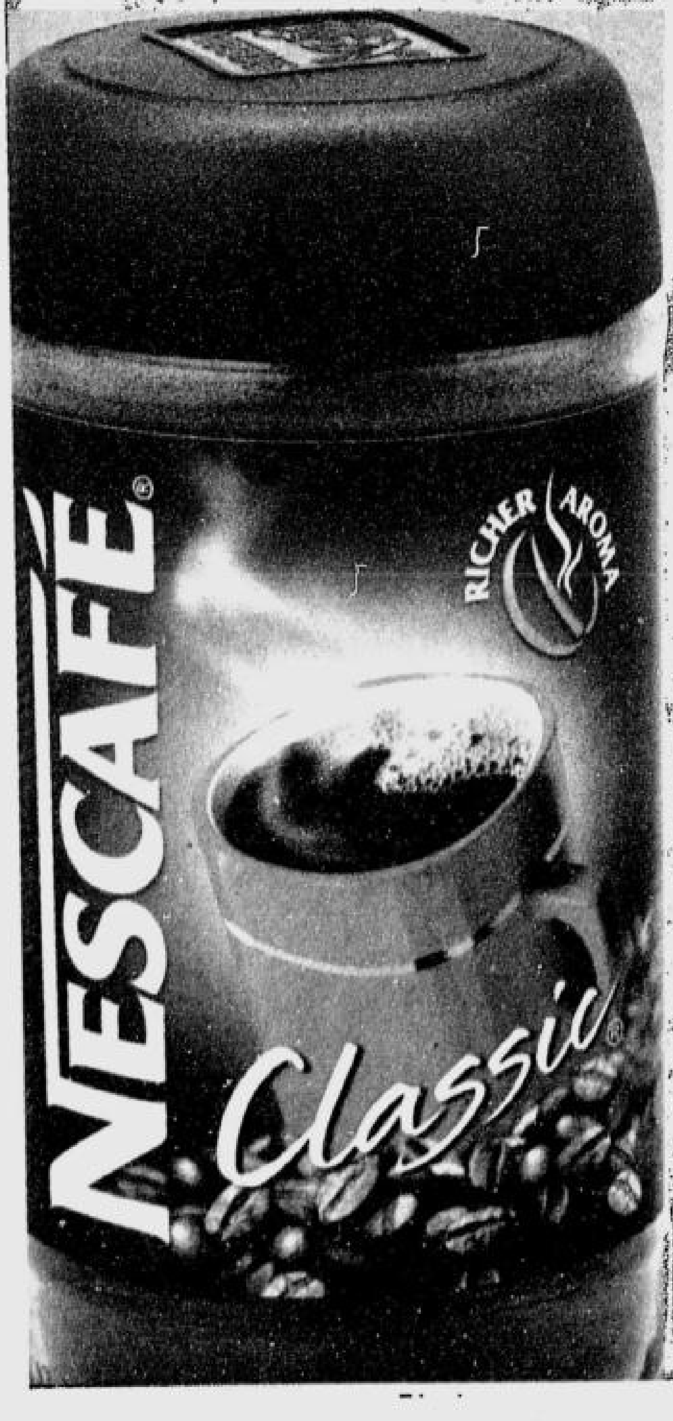
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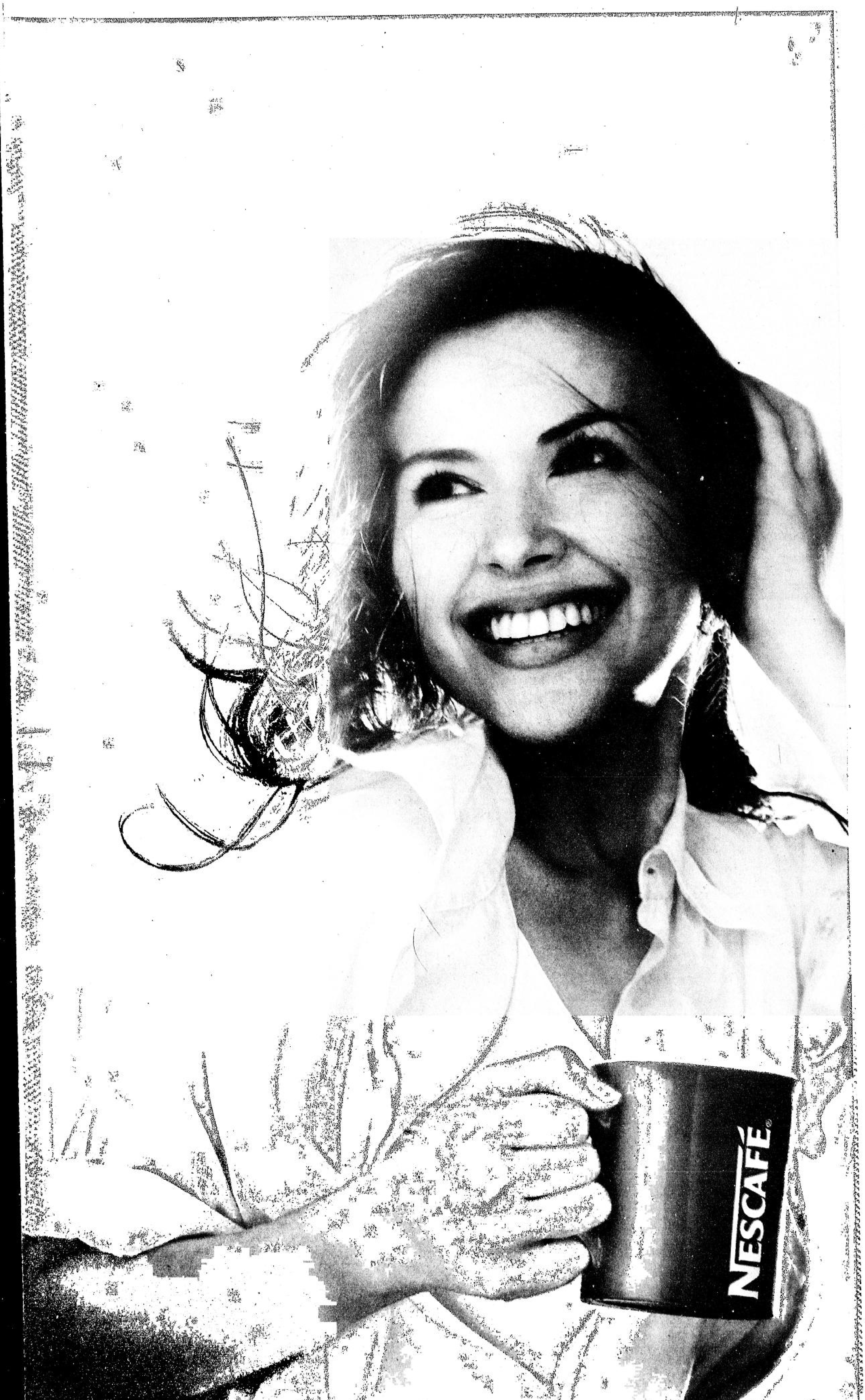
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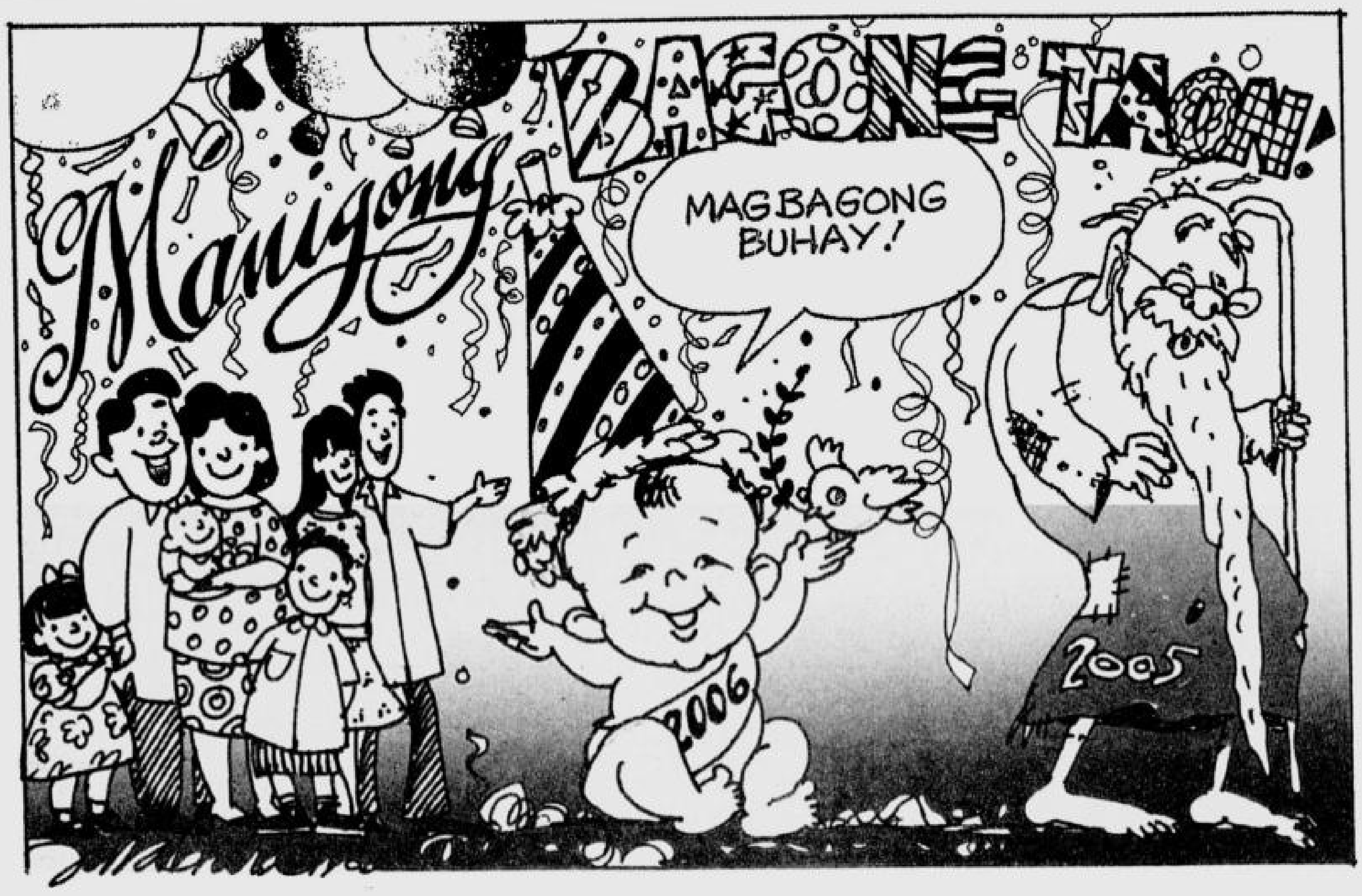

Getting real

ONE FINDING OF THE LATEST SOCIAL WEATHER Stations survey, released at the right time by an increasingly media-savvy SWS staff, is now being used as evidence that, despite everything, the Filipino remains an incurable optimist. Depending on how we define our terms, however, it may well be that Filipino optimism is actually what is holding the country back, rather than pushing it forward.

EDITORIAL

The SWS survey, taken during the last few days of November and the first days of December, shows an increase in the number of Filipinos who say they face the new year with hope ("*pagasa*," in the survey questionnaire), rather than fear ("*pangamba*").

From 81 percent the year before, the total rose to 85 percent. (Conversely, the number of Filipinos who said they faced the new year with fear dropped from 18 percent to 12 percent.) Compared with the Germans, who pioneered the hope vs. fear opinion poll—and whose hope index has not risen above 58 percent since German reunification in 1991—we are a slaphappy people, almost giddy with good cheer.

In its press statement, the SWS noted that "Hopefulness about the coming year 2006 is widespread in all areas—88 percent in Visayas, 87 percent in Metro Manila, 84 percent in Mindanao and 83 percent in Balance Luzon." It added: "Compared to a year ago, New Year hope is up by 10 points in Metro Manila, by 7 points in Visayas and by 5 points in Balance Luzon. In Mindanao, it slightly declined by 3 points." (The survey's margin of error is plus or minus 3 for nationwide figures and plus or minus 6 for regional figures.)

At first blush, these numbers (except perhaps for those related to Mindanao) tell the same old story: the Filipino's bamboo-like resilience, his things-will-get-better spirit, his incorrigible glass-is-half-full nature. In a year marked by serious scandal, at a time when many of the nation's institutions came under attack or a pall of doubt, the Filipino seems ready to let bygones be bygones and—to use one of the catchphrases of the year—move on.

This explanation (one of several, we hasten to add) is what makes the President and her defenders sleep better at night; the Filipino views what's coming up with more hope than fear because he finds it easy to forgive and to forget what had gone before.

They may want to wake up. The "New Year hope" index in the fourth quarter of 2000, at the start of the Estrada impeachment trial, was 87 percent. At the time the survey was conducted, the people-powered ouster of a popular president could not have been on any respondent's list of possible scenarios. And yet two months after that survey, where a statistically greater majority of Filipinos said they faced the new year with hope rather than fear, Joseph Estrada was packing his bags.

This turn of events begs the question: Just what is the relation of a perception poll (like the SWS survey) about hope and fear to reality as we know it?

The 2005 survey was taken almost exactly at the same time as the country's successful hosting of the Southeast Asian Games; did our accumulation of victories color the survey question? The 2004 survey had worse numbers, but the survey period took place before the sudden death of opposition presidential candidate Fernando Poe Jr. Where did that year's pessimistic strain come from?

We do not even know whether there are sensible answers to these and similar questions. This does not mean, though, that hope or fear surveys do not have a role to play in public discourse. They do; at the very least, they can help us understand our peculiar brand of optimism.

Hopefulness, per se, is not an indicator of national progress or economic well-being. If it were, Germany would not be the world's third or fourth largest economy. But we do think that optimism about the future is all about expectations. Living a better life in the coming year is a legitimate expectation, but it is not the same as expecting a higher quality of life; the latter expectation does not accept "*puwede na*" or makeshift standards.

In other words, we may be incurable optimists because we expect too little—of the future, or from ourselves. We let alleged crimes slide by because we do not demand an accounting; we are happy to continue eating two square meals a day and call that progress. Enough already. If this is optimism, let's all get real.

New Year wishes

SEPARATE OPINION

Isagani A. Cruz

THESE ARE MY WISHES FOR 2006 THAT BEgins this Sunday, the first day of the first week of the promising New Year. I wish they will all come true and with the guidance of Almighty God bring us to an altruistic and more rewarding life.

I wish that the warfare in Iraq and Afghanistan and between India and Pakistan and other parts of the world will end not only today but in the eternal future as envisioned in the UN Charter.

I wish that the Jews and the Arabs will end their centuries-old conflict and resolve to join hands in a new brotherhood of different faiths and a common aspiration for peace and the end of all hostilities.

I wish that the United States will desist from acting as the policeman of the world and instead assume the role of a sympathetic helper to all nations in need of its assistance but not its interference in their internal affairs.

I wish that the terrorism intimidating the world will end in a new spirit of international cooperation in the pursuit of worthwhile objectives like the alleviation of poverty, the conquest of disease, and the promotion of human rights.

I wish for the spread of education throughout the world, especially in its benighted regions, where arts and letters will flourish and science and technology will excite the curious mind and assist the working hand.

I wish for the deepening of religion by all faiths that worship the same God, although with different names, as a moral force for the attainment of a good and selfless life before the soul departs for another realm.

I wish for a longer life expectancy for children, whether they survive in the fastnesses of forests or dwell in the sophisticated cities, that they may be fascinated by the changing wonders of this earth and the mysteries of outer space.

I wish for the eradication of all slums, where human beings live in cramped and dirty hovels, as in the Rome that Nero burned and even now in this modern age, that rob their dwellers of their health and comfort, their hopes for a better future, and their pride and self respect.

I wish for all mankind that indestructible faith in the power of the Almighty, whatever is His name, to grant us new amazing discoveries in our own earth and in other mysterious planets that will make our lives a challenging adventure into the still unknown universe.

I wish for all the peoples on this earth, whatever their color or creed or condition, the ineluctable truth that they all live together in one world that belongs to all of them, to share, to enjoy, to protect, and to enrich.

I wish all of us to remember that Nature is a gift to us from the Creator who brought it out of the mists of forgotten time, to thrill us with the metamorphosis of the delicate butterfly, the serenity of the verdant meadows, the strength of the boulders in the forbidding mountains, the terrible thunder in the skies and the roaring of the waves in the angry seas, and, yes, the color and fragrance of the rose in bloom.

And for our country, our beloved Philippines, these are my fervent wishes.

I wish for the blessings of peace throughout the land where the people can live in peace despite their differences in ideology, religion, social status, manner of livelihood, political loyalties, physical attributes, and other superficial disparities that now separate rather than unite them into one indivisible nation.

I wish for that approachable future, hopefully soon and perhaps as early as in this brand-new year, when many of our people will not have to work elsewhere, away from family and home in some distant lands, many as domestic helpers and even as misplaced professionals, because their own country cannot give them the honest living they can find only in foreign shores.

I wish for a new group of leaders, from Malacañang through Congress and the Supreme Court and the local officials down to the lowly barangay, that will give true meaning to the now empty aphorism that a public office is a public trust, to be discharged with full devotion to the public interest as their highest and noblest goal.

To wish is to aspire for something that cannot be attained, as where an idiot wishes he were a genius. To hope is to long for something that is possible and attainable, as where a student hopes to pass the bar examinations. So I have misused the word "wish" when I should have used "hope" instead in this wistful article. What I have wished for, after all, are not impossible dreams.

'Playerful'? Prayerful!

MOMENTS

Fr. Jerry M. Orbos, SVD

WHEN A DEATH ROW CONVICT WAS ASKED if he had any final statement, he answered: "All I want to express is my gratitude to my mother who never stopped loving me since my childhood, all throughout my adolescent years, and in my adultery."

* * *

Today, the first day of the year is the solemnity of Mary, Mother of God. In Today's gospel (Lk. 2, 16-21) we see Mary, a loving Mother so focused on her son Jesus. Amid the many mysteries and wonders that went before and accompanied the birth of her Son, "Mary kept all these things, reflecting on them in her heart." Only a mother's heart can deeply and truly feel, sympathize, empathize and understand her own child, without conditions. Thank God for mothers. Thank God for Mama Mary, our Mother.

* * *

There's a whole year ahead of us. A lot of things will happen this year, both good and bad, happy and sad. But let us take our cue from Mama Mary. Let us learn to reflect and ponder, to stay focused on her Son through it all. May we all be more prayerful and stay rooted in the divine will. Wishing you all more prayerful and reflective moments in the coming year. Perhaps we can all make this our New Year's resolution: To be more prayerful and less "playerful."

* * *

It's a new year! Fresh start, and new beginnings. Let us not be burdened by the could-have-been's and the should-have-been's of the past year. Neither should we be crippled with the what-if's and the maybe's of the coming year. Let us learn from Mama Mary. She was strong because she was a very focused person. If we are doing our best, and if we are obedient to God's will, then we need not look back with regrets, or look forward with fear.

* * *

There was one Christmas moment I experienced last December 24. On my way to our home for the *noche buena*, I happened to pass by a group of "cart people" in a dark corner somewhere in Kamuning. I stopped at the other side of the street to observe them. They were just sitting there, doing nothing, eating nothing. I mean, this was Christmas eve, and here I was about to enjoy a good meal with my family. I turned around, went back to my office and brought them some biscuits, fruits and whatever little I could give them. It was a little act of kindness that brought so much joy that could be seen on their faces. And as I drove on, I thought I saw on my rear-view mirror that dark corner in Kamuning suddenly aglow with Christmas lights.

* * *

There was another Christmas moment that happened when I prayed to Mama Mary to help me in our traditional Christmas gift-giving in Pangasinan. I have collected, from friends, pails, candies, toys, clothes; but I lacked fruits and drinks to make my list complete. So, as our Mama always told us since we were children, go tell Mama Mary. The next day, fruits and soft drinks were sent over by friends to my office as if they were instructed by Mama Mary to do just that.

* * *

There was one light moment in my busy schedule last Christmas: After the Mass, a 10-year-old boy walked up to me, pulled out his wallet, and handed me a P100-bill without saying anything. For a moment, I just stood there, looking at him in surprise and amazement. I don't know what made him do it. For all you know, it was from his little savings. Or, maybe, he chose to forego a favorite toy. But he did it. And he did it in sincerity, in humility, and with a smile. Big boys can surely learn a lot from this little boy.

* * *

Perhaps, some of you still have some leftovers from the holidays. Remember: The spirit of Christmas giving and sharing does not end on Christmas day. Instead of letting your extras gather dust and moss for another year, why don't you clean up your cabinets and send them over to charitable institutions. Better still, write out a cheque or send some cash, in gratitude for all the blessings you have received. An old song put it beautifully: "It's not the things you do at Christmas but the Christmas things you do the whole year through that makes Christmas."

* * *

THINK ABOUT IT: "To realize the value of one year, ask a student who failed and has to repeat one school year; to realize the value of one month, ask a mother who gave birth to a premature baby; to realize the value of one week, ask the editor of a weekly newspaper; to realize the value of one hour, ask lovers who are waiting to meet each other; to realize the value of one minute, ask a person who missed the train; to realize the value of one second, ask a person who just avoided an accident." Yes, let us treasure every moment, and let us live each day of 2006 to the fullest.

* * *

I am praying that 2006 will be a better year for all of us, in all aspects, in Jesus' name! Happy New Year Philippines! Happy New Year everyone!

Don't forget, we have a Mother. We need not fear, for she is near.

* * *

A moment with the Lord

Lord, help me to be less playerful and more prayerful in this new year. Amen.

A renewal of Philippine-British ties

REVEILLE

Ramon J. Farolan

IN 1785, WITH THE ORGANIZATION OF THE Real Compania de Filipinas, the Philippines was opened to foreign commerce and became an exporter of hemp, sugar, tobacco, coconut oil and other products. To encourage greater agricultural activity, foreign banks and commercial houses made available credits and loans to small and large landowners.

With this development, Ilocanos to the north, faced with a scarcity of arable land, started to look, not just to the east at the Cagayan Valley but also to the south, particularly along the Pangasinan border.

Around 1884, a young Ilocano couple, Urbano Morales and Carmen Lopez left their hometown of Vigan, Ilocos Sur and migrated to Dagupan, Pangasinan. After a short period, they decided to move farther south toward Pampanga. Up to the 19th century, it took almost a day's journey by horse to travel from Dagupan to San Fernando, Pampanga. Much of the undergrowth in the jungles that separated the two areas consisted of a tough weed that the Aetas, the indigenous group living here, called *tanlac* or *tarlac*. The Aetas gave its name to this stretch of wilderness. Here, the young couple established their roots and through hard work and thriftiness, hallmarks of the Ilocano, they were able to accumulate large tracts of land which eventually became part of the municipality of Moncada in the new province of Tarlac.

As the town prospered, particularly with the establishment of the Manila Railroad system, which had Moncada as one of its regular stops, the Morales family also became the most influential and possibly the wealthiest in Moncada. To this day, the Morales family home serves as a landmark in the area. It's a bit run down; nevertheless, one can still sense its old glory.

Urbano and Carmen had three sons: Luis (1885-1941), Filadelfo (1887-1946), and Eusebio (1888-1950). The Morales couple exemplified the *ilustrado* class at that time. Like other affluent Filipino parents, they were deeply conscious of the importance of education as a source of new ideas which would hasten the growth and development of a strong and independent nation.

The three Morales boys would grow up to become leading citizens of the community. Luis would finish law at the Escuela de Derecho in Manila and go into politics, serving as assemblyman, governor and senator of the province. Filadelfo would become the first municipal doctor of Paniqui, Tarlac, where he served up to the time of his death. He had a reputation as a strict disciplinarian, but he was also known for his generous heart, attending to all, rich or poor.

The youngest boy, Eusebio, was born on Aug. 13, 1888 and this is where the second half of our story begins. "Sebio," as he was known to family and friends, wanted to be an engineer, but the schools in the Philippines at that time did not offer engineering as a course. So his father decided to send him to England and requested his friend, Antonio Regidor, a long time resident of London, to help make the necessary arrangements.

Speaking only Ilocano and some Spanish, Eusebio sailed for England and was placed under the care of Fred Allden, an English headmaster of a school for boys. Once fluent in English, he enrolled in an engineering course at Durham University and followed this with an apprenticeship at the Thames Engineering Works.

He had also fallen in love with Frances Allden, a lovely English school teacher and niece of Fred Allden. A few months after completing his apprenticeship, the short, dark-complexioned Filipino boy married the petite, brown-haired, blue-eyed English lady in a union of opposites. Not a few of her relatives were concerned about her going to such a far away land to live with "those" people; but she would admonish them, as only a woman deeply in love could, that if "they are his people, then they must be fine and wonderful folks." From his picture, I would say that Eusebio had more of the presence and character of a Yul Brynner but with lots of hair.

They spent their honeymoon on a British ship, the "Rajputana" on their way back to the Philippines, passing through the Suez Canal. Settling down in Moncada, Tarlac, the townspeople there would comment that she was "*kasla Birhen*" (like the Virgin), what with her blue eyes and fair complexion. She adopted quite well to the heat, the rain and the mosquitos of her new home.

Eusebio and Frances would have three girls and a boy. The eldest girl, Mary, married Pacifico Joaquin and they had five girls and a boy. The second girl, Consuelo, would marry Jaime Paz, and their union would be blessed with seven boys and a girl.

In 1995, their youngest boy, Victor, left for Cambridge University in England for masteral work leading to a doctorate in Archeology. Here he would meet a lovely English girl, Lisa Goddard, at a strawberry fair in the university. After completing his doctoral work, Victor came home and like his great grandfather, Eusebio, exactly a century ago, he would return with an English bride. Dr. Victor J. Paz is presently the director of the Archeological Studies Program at the University of the Philippines.

Last month, Alon Brendan Goddard Paz, 7.3 lbs., was born, the latest in a line of Philippine-British co-productions started by Eusebio Morales at the beginning of the last century.

A Happy New Year to All!

Moments and surprises

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

I HATE LOOKING AT NEW APPOINTMENTS books. The blank pages are a stark reminder of just how uneventful my life is as well as how unplanned it is. You wouldn't think it, given my crammed daily schedule, but there's really very little forward planning to my days.

Many years back, like most individuals, I would write down a list of "to-do" things for the coming year, usually headed by "lose 20 pounds," even if, inevitably, I would end up putting on even more weight by year's end. Eventually, this convinced me that there was no point in looking that far ahead, that life held far more surprises than could be contained in an appointments book, and it was a far better policy instead to take life's blows—and boosts—as they came.

Surprises have always been a Jimenez trademark, anyway. My paternal grandfather, our Lolo Ponso, was a connoisseur of surprises, we are told. He would concoct a surprise party or gift or treat at the slightest excuse: the arrival of a child from studies in Manila, an unexpected guest, a birthday, an anniversary.

Shortly after the Liberation, an American banker wrote Lolo Ponso—who, as a provincial treasurer, was also the representative of the local branch of the Philippine National Bank—to request him to prepare a "modest" party for the businessman's son, a GI stationed in Leyte, who was celebrating his birthday. This could not but have appealed to Lolo's penchant for springing surprises, and he enlisted the entire clan for the celebration. The soldier and his buddies were invited to their home, and there they were roped into a full-blown party, complete with cake and candles. When the businessman wrote to ask for the bill, Lolo reportedly sent him a statement for the grand total of P0.

While I was growing up, no occasion was worth celebrating unless it was marked by some surprise or other. My Papa was a great romantic, surprising Mama with a dozen roses on her birthday each year, even if my mother would often mask her reaction by sniffing "such a waste of money!" Often, we would be asked to conspire in a grand production to greet or honor a relative, replete with theme costumes, a "talent show" or even a spoof.

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I KNEW I'd earned my stripes as a Jimenez six years ago when I pulled off a surprise party for my husband's 50th birthday.

While he was away in Cebu, I managed to book the venue, issue invitations to our family and friends and his officemates, prepare the menu and even work out a scenario for getting him to the party unawares.

I told him I had to attend a cocktail party, so he and the kids would have to pick me up on the way to our usual birthday dinner. The children reported that he was grumbling on the way to the party venue, that "it's just like your mother to schedule something else on my birthday." The delighted smile that lit up his face told me that all the effort had been worth it. When I told my Tita Chul, Papa's youngest sister, how relieved I was that I was able to pull off the surprise party, she remarked: "You wouldn't have been a Jimenez if you couldn't!"

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SO MAYBE in this way, life is a Jimenez, indeed. Because life certainly knows how to throw surprises.

And this is how I plan to live the rest of this year and the ones that follow. Grand visions and overarching missions are fine, but it's the minor events, the unexpected glitches, the pleasant surprises, that mark our days. Memory, it's said, is nothing but a collection of moments which, in recollection, can assume importance far beyond their real significance or the way they really took place.

I forget the context, but my teen-age daughter once blurted out that she thought I was a "bad" mother because when she was six or seven and running a fever, I had to make a side trip from the doctor's office for an important meeting. When she wanted to lie down on my lap during the meeting, I nudged her to sit up, embarrassed before my colleagues. "Imagine, I was sick and you wouldn't even let me lie down!" she scolded.

A parent's lot is never an easy one. Lost in this recollection are the many other times I or her dad took days off from work to look after her or her brother. It seems I would never be forgiven for that one time, that one meeting. Children's memories are notoriously discriminating, and no matter how unfair it may seem, one's record as a parent may in the end boil down to nothing more than an album of moments, often regardless of context or theme.

So this is how I plan to live out the rest of 2006—savoring moments and coping with surprises as they come. An unexpected kindness, a letter or a phone call, a gift when one isn't expecting any, illness and disability, a death in the family. None of these can be scheduled or plotted. Life consists of moments and surprises, and accepting them with grace and dignity—and delight when called for—is what's meant by truly living well.

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MY brother Manny, a resident of Virginia in the United States, passed away on the evening of Dec. 29 (morning, Dec. 30, Manila time) less than a year after being diagnosed with gastric cancer.

For our US-based relatives and friends, his remains will be available for viewing on Jan. 2—from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the National Funeral Home, Lee Highway, Falls Church, Va. Burial services are to follow at 2 p.m.

Family members based here are planning memorial services of our own for Manny next week, pending final arrangements. Meantime, may we request for prayers for Manny and for all of us he has left behind, especially his immediate family: his wife Angie, children Michelle and Diego and Rocky and Kim, and grandchildren Keona and Elisha.

'Hello Garci, Happy New Year!'

PUBLIC LIVES

Randy David

Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo might have called former Election Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano on Jan. 1st last year to wish him the blessings of the New Year. Their brief harmless call could have been wiretapped, spliced and later mixed with other recorded material, to produce the controversial Garci tapes.

This is the gist of the theory recently propounded by my fellow INQUIRER columnist, Honesto G. General. "Whoever produced the tapes—let's call him Lobo—started wiretapping the cell and landline phones of President Arroyo and Garcillano right after the 2004 elections. When Lobo had enough recorded material, he produced the Garci tapes by electronically transferring words and phrases into what was later referred to as the master tapes….The whole project took a year to finish." (PDI, 12/19/05)

When I chanced upon Mr. General's column in the business section, I thought this absurd proposition was his way of ridiculing Malacañang's futile attempt to dismiss the Garci tapes. I realized, to my dismay, that he was serious. From the premise that the technology for splicing tapes and mixing sounds now exists, he draws the conclusion that the Garci tapes must be fake. It had taken one year, he says, for these spurious conversations to surface because that's how long it took to gather the raw material needed to assemble the fake Garci tapes. He offers no empirical proof to support this astounding conclusion.

Yet he questions the reliability of all previous attempts to rationally deal with the tapes. "No voice expert—certainly not Randy David—can authenticate the Garci tapes by just playing the tapes, even repeatedly. Only a similar set of equipment that produced them can detect the fakery." I disagree. Inquiry and verification can take many routes and employ a variety of methods. We may call upon a voice authenticator to tell us if the voices in a tape match the voice prints of a given sample of voices. We may ask a recording technician to ascertain the physical integrity of a piece of recorded material. But all that one needs to make sense of a conversation is knowledge of the language and a lot of common sense.

If one wishes to go beyond common sense, he may consult at least two relevant fields of study to deal with the task of interpretation: hermeneutics and ethnomethodology. Biblical exegetes typically use the first to decipher the contested messages of the Scriptures. Conversation analysts employ the second to reveal the normative and achieved character of conversations. I have approached the Garci tapes with some background on the analytic strategies of these two disciplines.

A careful analysis of the content of these tapes will reveal that nowhere in the conversations does GMA actually give the order to cheat or manipulate the canvassing process. What one will hear in these exchanges is GMA sharing her worries about some aspects of the ongoing canvassing with Garci. Why Garci? Because, obviously, the man had been entrusted with a big assignment that went over and beyond his role as an election commissioner. Garci—sometimes in exasperation but barely showing it—allays her anxiety by telling her what he intends to do about the problem or situation she brings up. What lends strong credibility to these tapes is the way they are intricately woven around unstated understandings between GMA and Garci. These understandings function as the invisible fabric that binds the utterances into a coherent whole. This is the nature of conversations. Very seldom are the tacit understandings made explicit—especially when the subject matter is illicit. A rare and revealing exception is given in the following exchange:

Garci: Hello, Ma'am. Good evening.

GMA: Hello, *dun sa Lanao del Sur at tsaka sa Basilan, di raw nagma-match ang SOV* (statement of vote) *sa COC* (certificate of canvas).

Garci: *Ang sinasabi nila, nawala na naman ho?*

GMA: *Hindi nagmamatch.*

Garci: *Hindi nagmamatch? May posibilidad na hindi magmatch kung hindi nila sinunod yung individual SOV ng mga munisipyo. Pero aywan ko lang ho kung sa atin pabor o hindi. Kasi, dun naman sa Basilan at Lanao Sur, itong ginawa nilang pagpataas sa inyo, hindi naman, kwan, maayos naman ang paggawa eh.*

GMA: *So nagmamatch?*

Garci: *Oho. Sa Basilan, alam nyo naman ang mga military dun eh, hindi masyadong marunong kasi silang gumawa eh. Katulad ho dun sa Sulu….(garbled) Pero hindi naman ho, kinausap ko na yung chairman ng board sa Sulu. Ang akin, patataguin ko na muna ang EO ng Panguntaran para hindi sila makatestigo ho…* (Here, Garci artfully shifts to another topic.)

In this exchange, as in many others, GMA brings up the troubles posed by the lack of fit between the municipal SOVs and the provincial COCs in two Mindanao provinces. The discrepancy is a reliable index of the extent of *dagdag-bawas* (vote padding/shaving). Garci assures GMA that the operation in Lanao Sur was orderly ("*maayos naman ang ginawang pagpapataas sa inyo.*") "*Pagpapataas*" is a thinly veiled reference to vote-padding, and it is interesting that Garci actually used the term. With Basilan, he could offer no guarantee. His explanation for the mismatch there is the inexperience of the soldiers assigned to prepare the doctored returns.

The Garci tapes provide abundant evidence that GMA had full knowledge of the massive cheating operation that was done in her behalf. It is cynical to say cheating is normal in our political system. The nation will not be able to break with the past until GMA herself finds the moral courage to explain her involvement in these shameless conversations.

Comments to public.lives@gmail.com

Cheers to a New Year

REBEL WITHOUT A CLUE

Patricia Evangelista

2005 WAS THE YEAR THAT THE EUROPEAN SPACECRAFT Titan landed on Saturn's moon, and the year the King of Nepal fired his government. That year, Kuwaiti women won the right to vote, the iPod swept over the world and Michael Jackson was cleared of molestation charges.

All over the world, 2005 is known as the year of Great Disasters, with hurricanes and earthquakes ripping away at the fabric of civilization.

In the Philippines, the rallyists were "canonized," the SEA games turned out to be a roaring success, and thousands of new homes were built for the poorest of the poor. It was a year of firsts: the year Big Brother first spoke and Maximo Oliveros sashayed across the silver screen into the hearts of critics.

Today is the first official day of 2006.

Every new year, I open a brand new diary and make a list of my resolutions. The list usually includes writing a bestseller, praying for the long-awaited increase in cup size (I'm hoping to be a late bloomer), and possible steps toward world domination. As the list magically disappears by mid-January with only one resolution crossed out (#14, Get a haircut), I begin to think there must be something terribly wrong with my resolutions.

In the interest of surviving the year 2006, I intend to update my list to provide not resolutions, but doable, liveable, and achievable solutions (suggested by three of the self-help books I've scanned in National Bookstore). There are several areas I want to tackle, so I'm going to take them one step at a time (suggested by self-help book No. 4, Michael Jordan's "I Can't Accept Not Trying.")

1. Be fit.

Every year, on the eve of Jan. 1st, I do 200 sit-ups on my bedroom floor as part of my resolution to get into shape. By the time Jan. 2 rolls around, I am an exhausted blob of jelly—but a happy, complacent blob. I can never seem to bring myself to perform even a "leg lift" in the following 364 days.

It's not such a bad thing though. If calculated to spread across the rest of the year, my yearly 200-sit-up exercise quota runs equal to half a sit-up a day.

This year, my first resolution is to complete 400 sit-ups. Even if I never bend over for the rest of 2006, for as long as I finish playing pretzel tonight, I can claim to have 1.096 sit-ups under my belt every day until 2007.

As for athletic achievement, let me enumerate my athletic skills: I can't ride a bike. I can swim for 30-second periods (or for as long as I can hold my breath). I can't run farther than the length of a classroom hallway. Nine times out of 10, I can roll a bowling ball in a straight line (down the gutter). I can't understand the rules of golf, volleyball or basketball—for one thing, why are people penalized for traveling down a basketball court?

This year, my resolution is to master the basics of one sport. Not to win, mind you, just to understand the game. I'm told scrabble and boggle are now considered athletic events.

2. Be organized.

I'm what politically correct people probably call "organizationally challenged." My mother calls me a slob. A perfect illustration would be my boarding house room. The floor is carpeted in clothes, the bed, a rumpled mess half-covered with more clothes (the other half having been shoved to the floor), and secondhand books are jammed in every possible cranny. The hampers, of course, are empty and beautifully clean.

I figure the reason everything's a mess is because I never know where things are. My resolution is quite ingenious. I intend to create a card catalogue of my clothes, cross-referenced according to cut, color and utility. Take a blouse, for example. Color: white. Cut: sleeveless. Utility: general. Location: floor. Brilliant.

My final organization resolution deals with procrastination. I am a sad, sad case of someone who puts everything off an hour after the last minute. My friends have been used to receiving from me text-message replies a week late, and e-mails months in the sending.

I understand the value of lists: it's harder to run away from the written word than from the spoken promise. I find sheets of paper in my pocket ordering me to "buy shoelaces" and "go there." As to why I need shoelaces and where "there" is, I'm usually clueless. But it's a start.

The solution is simple—a master list of lists. A list for groceries to buy, a list of bills to pay, a list for homework due, a list for Spanish conjugations to memorize, a list of people to write to, and several lists of suggestions toward changing the world—all nicely summed up in another long list. I figure a nice big color-coded notebook will do the job. I've never doubted the power of the written word.

3. Be happy

There are some people with temperaments that can accept whatever life throws at them. They can laugh over insults and be pleased with success. They can take a loss with a shrug and a win with smile.

I'm not one of them. When I pass an exam or find a long-lost book, I jump and laugh and celebrate with chocolate. When the world isn't behaving the way I want it to, I rage. At the risk of melodrama, it's either the heights of heaven or the depths of despair. It's not a very comfortable way to live.

So I'm going to change all that. My real resolution for the grand year of 2006 is this: I'm going to be happy.

In the annals of happiness, the Philippines ranks No. 6—coming next to Venezuela, Nigeria, Ireland, Iceland, and the Netherland—but the happiest in Asia.

How to be happy? Live with passion, people say. So I will. I'll jump for chances that are out of the world, learn how to dance like no one's watching, and stand for what I believe in. I may not save the world, but I'll try it my way. I'm going to admit that I'm young, stupid, and with as much right to go crazy and live life as everyone else.

I'm going to graduate, find a job that pays rent and will make me wake up with a thrill in the mornings. I'm going to figure out who my friends are and give them hugs every two weeks (virtual hugs when impossible). I'll learn how to cross over from the LRT to the MRT. I'm going to stop pretending I'm ladylike and attempt to find out what being a lady is. I'm going to stop at every *ukay-ukay*, go to every book sale, watch as many movies as I can, and learn to cook bread. And whenever I can, I'm going to shout out how proud I am that the accident of birth made me Pinay.

And I'm going to wish everyone as much happiness as they can get—Happy, Happy New Year.

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Send comments to pat.evangelista@gmail.com

TALK of the TOWN

Please send feedback to
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Editor Juan V. Sarmiento Jr.

NICOL David

Lighting up the courts

KUALA LUMPUR—SHE STARTED AT THE age of five with a homemade racquet, which her coach pieced together from the broken pieces of "real" racquets. The next year she started playing competitively.

The "11-year veteran" made sports history in December when she became the first Asian and the world's youngest women's squash champion after beating top seed Rachael Grinham of Australia in the final of the World Open in Hong Kong.

The straight-A student from the northern Malaysian island of Penang earlier upset Holland's world No. 1-ranked Vanessa Aktinson, the defending champion and second seed, in the semifinal.

Her win over Aktinson means that when the new rankings come out in January, she will be the new world No. 1.

And Nicol David is all of 22 years old. She won six professional titles and the World Games gold medal in Duisburg in July. The victories include her completion of all the titles at the prestigious British Open squash championships.

There have been stumbles along the way. When she lost in the Asian Games final to Hong Kong's Rebecca Chiu in 2002, she took a sabbatical. She returned with a vengeance in 2003.

She was ranked No. 53 then, but by the end of the year, she was world No. 13. She broke into the top 10 by January 2004 and climbed to No. 3 by May 2005.

Train harder

No. 1 was a mere matter of destiny, it would seem, but even now she's not resting on her laurels.

"There is still so much more for me to learn and I will need to train harder to face up to the challenges next year. I will take one step at a time and plan carefully," said Nicol.

"It is going to be a hectic year and I also have to set my priorities. But all that will have to wait as I want to enjoy this short holiday," she said after returning home from the Hong Kong meet in December.

Since 2003, she has been training in Amsterdam under Liz Irving, who is full of praise for Nicol's high level of discipline. "She is a delight to work with. She is a very dedicated player. Nicol has improved a lot mentally as well as tactically.

"But there is still a lot to work on," added Irving.

In a country starved of sports heroes, Nicol has already made her mark—on the world stage, no less. She has already been tagged a role model for Malaysian youth.

She has already galvanized a national movement of sorts, with more young Malaysians trading in their badminton racquets for squash.

Speaking of racquets, Nicol has held on to that wooden, makeshift racquet all these years—proof that the mark of a true champion is not in the equipment but in the attitude, drive and passion.

-The Star

HWANG Woo-suk

From hero to zero?

SEOUL—SOUTH KOREA'S CLONING PIONEER Hwang Woo-suk could not have imagined his year would end this way: Only a few weeks ago, he was dubbed "the pride of Korea" and was a celebrity on the global scientific scene, producing two major breakthroughs this year.

Now the 52-year-old veterinarian, once considered a leading scientist in human stem cell research, faces allegations that he had duped the scientific world and the Korean public.

His possible downfall has sent shock waves throughout both the international scientific community and South Korean society. The government has ordered a probe and thousands of ordinary Koreans have taken to the streets to protest his vilification and proclaim his innocence.

Bombarded by accusations over the validity of his stem cell work, Hwang said on Dec. 16 he would retract a paper from US scientific journal Science about patient-tailored stem cells because it contained crucial "intentional" mistakes.

But he insisted his team did produce patient-tailored embryonic stem cells and would be able to provide authentic evidence of this soon.

"Six researchers have jointly participated in the process of establishing patient-specific stem cells and we are not suspicious of the fact even by one percent," he said.

Earlier, a close collaborator of Hwang claimed that he fabricated his research and that most of the 11 tailor-made stem cells reported in the paper were fake.

An investigation panel at Seoul National University, to which the professor belonged, concluded his team provided no data to prove a claim it had produced tailored embryonic stem cells. The panel said the team may have produced only two stem lines, not 11.

Hwang and his team announced in April that they had successfully developed "patient-tailored" stem cells—an accomplishment hailed by many scientists as a major step toward the goal of treating patients suffering from intractable diseases with their own, regenerated tissues.

In August, the veterinary professor revealed the world's first cloned dog, Snuppy.

A storm of allegations began when a US researcher and co-author of Hwang's studies discovered that, contrary to published statements, two junior researchers in the South Korean lab had donated egg cells for the cloning experiment—a practice frowned on by the international scientific community because of the possibility of coercion being used to get the ova.

Faced with the mounting pressure, Hwang admitted to the ethical lapse over the way the ova were donated and resigned from all positions he held, including the top one at the World Stem Cell Hub, an ambitious project based in South Korea to provide custom-made human embryonic stem cell lines to international researchers.

However, further controversy arose when Korean media raised doubts over the authenticity of the photos or DNA fingerprints supporting Hwang's research paper.

—Lee Sun-young, The Korea Herald

Feet firmly on the ground despite fame

HANOI—TWENTY-FIVE YEARS ago, a young man from war-torn Vietnam made headlines when he won the Grand Prix of the world's oldest piano competition, the Chopin Piano Competition in Warsaw, Poland.

The year was 1980. As the lights dimmed and the audience fell silent, 22-year-old Dang Thai Son sat alone at the piano, momentarily overcome by fear. He was the first Vietnamese ever to enter the Chopin international piano competition, up against 148 other young pianists from around the world.

Yet as he began to play, his fingers floating across the keyboard with precision and grace, he once more felt calm and in control.

He won the gold medal. "It was my biggest dream," he said. "I thought it was too much."

Born into a family with a music-mad father and a mother who was a professional pianist, Son was surrounded by music throughout his childhood. He fell in love with the works of the Polish-born French composer after his mother was invited to the Warsaw Chopin Competition in 1970 as a guest and returned home with a complete set of Chopin scores and recordings.

Isaac Katz, a Russian pianist who visited Hanoi in 1974, heard Son's playing and immediately saw his potential. Katz tutored him and Son won a scholarship to the Moscow Tchaikovsky Conservatory, where he spent eight years.

Since winning the Chopin competition prize and then graduating from the Moscow Tchaikovsky Conservatory, in 1983, his career has been a whirlwind of world-class concert halls, orchestras and recordings.

He became the first Asian to be invited to teach at the famous music department at Montreal University and is now a Canadian citizen.

However, he hasn't let success overwhelm him and acknowledges the limitations faced by an Asian playing a musical instrument designed for Europeans.

"I am an Asian, but I play Western classical music, so I should combine the two cultures in my performance and playing style," he said.

In 1999, Son was the only non-Polish pianist invited to play at a special concert in Warsaw that commemorated the 150th anniversary of Chopin's death. This year, he also took part in the Toyota Classical Concert Program back in Hanoi.

"I believe I don't have to be in Vietnam to contribute to my homeland," he said, but added that he dreams of establishing his own school here, but not to make money.

The priority would be to "discover and support talents from Vietnam," he said.

- Vietnam News

DANG Thai Son

PHOTOS BY ASIAN NEWS NETWORK

Asians who made a difference

THE ASIAN NEWS NETWORK SELECTED 13 "Asian Personalities of the Year (2005)," including former election commissioner Virgilio Garcillano who figured in the "Hello Garci" tape scandal that almost toppled the Arroyo administration.

Talk of the Town is featuring only eight personalities in this issue because of limited space. They are Nicol David, the world's youngest women's squash champion, of Malaysia; Dang Thai Son, a Vietnamese piano virtuoso; Suciwati, widow of Munir, a human rights advocate, and actress Dian Sastrowardoyo—both of Indonesia.

Hwang Woo-suk, disgraced cloning pioneer of South Korea; astronauts Fei Junlong and Nie Haisheng of China; and, Takashi Nagase who served in the Japanese Imperial Army during World War II.

They were chosen for making a positive impact on their respective countries save for Hwang, who was once heralded as a national hero, but is now regarded as a disgrace for falsely claiming that his research team had produced tailored embryonic stem cells.

ANN is a group of 12 national English language dailies in Asia. Its members are: The Daily Star (Bangladesh), China Daily (China), The Statesman (India), The Jakarta Post (Indonesia), Daily Yomiuri and Yomiuri Shimbum (Japan), Sin Chew Daily (Malaysia), The Star (Malaysia), and Philippine Daily Inquirer (Philippines).

The Straits Times (Singapore), The Korea Herald (South Korea), The Island (Sri Lanka), The Nation (Thailand), and Vietnam News (Vietnam).

Boyhood dreams, flying dragons

BEIJING—WHAT DO YOU WANT to be when you grow up? If you were born after the Cold War-fuelled space race in the last century, you might have answered, "an astronaut."

For two men, that boyhood dream did come true, borne on the wings of an entire nation's hopes.

Different boyhood dreams for different boys though. When he was a poor kid growing up in a remote village in Central China's Hubei Province, Nie Haisheng fantasized about sprouting large wings and flying into the sky on the back of a cow.

The reality was better than a cow. On Oct. 12 he rode in the module of the Shenzhou VI spacecraft with fellow astronaut Fei Junlong.

Nie lived in the village until he was 18, with his six elder sisters and younger brother, doing farm work while he studied. Although his family was very poor, his parents tried their best to send him to school.

His father died when he was 14 years old, so Nie had to drop out of school to support the family. Fortunately, with the encouragement of his teachers, Nie enrolled again and graduated from high school with good grades.

Like his fellow astronaut Fei, Nie enrolled as a fighter pilot in 1984. Along with China's first astronaut Yang Liwei, Fei and several others, Nie was selected as one of China's first potential astronauts.

The 1.72 m-tall Nie celebrated his 41st birthday while in orbit. He said he had tears in his eyes when he heard his daughter singing "Happy Birthday."

Fei's parents, meanwhile, clearly knew what they were doing when they named their son "Handsome Flying Dragon." They could have added "unassuming." The 1.7 m-tall 40-year-old simply said "I feel good" minutes after the historic launch.

Born in Bacheng in the city of Kunshan in East China's Jiangsu Province, Fei has two sisters. He joined the air force in 1982 when he was 17 years old.

After being selected for astronaut training in 1998, his mother, now 71, asked him what his new work entailed. He replied: "Still flying, but much higher."

In fact, when he was still a little boy, he had another dream—becoming a professional painter. He was so crazy about drawing that he would always take art paper to class at primary school.

Even now, he often draws pictures and practices Chinese calligraphy.

"Painting and calligraphy make people calm and put them in the right frame of mind," Fei said.

"He likes to learn a lot of things every day like our 13-year-old son," said Wang Jie, Fei's wife.

- Zhang Feng & Zhang Congrong, China Daily

FEI Junlong (left) and Nie Haisheng

DIAN Sastrowardoyo

The women have it

JAKARTA—TWO WOMEN OF WILDLY DIVERGENT backgrounds are making their mark in Indonesia, in completely different ways.

The death of human rights campaigner Munir from poisoning on his flight to the Netherlands on Sept. 7, 2004, has highlighted the need for the state to legally protect activists, his widow says.

"The protection could take the form of a law that safeguards activists, including journalists and doctors, whose work relates to human rights," said Suciwati, a well-known labor activist.

The 38-year-old said such a law was needed to fight the fear of intimidation, violence and even murder that was often faced by activists.

She hoped the death of her husband, who was the executive director of the Imparsial human rights watchdog, a nongovernment organization critical of rights abuses, would not cause fear among other activists.

Suciwati was working as a Bahasa Indonesia teacher at a high school in Malang in 1991 when she quit to become a labor activist. The graduate of the Malang Teaching Institute then went to work at a garments company.

As chair of the Kelompok Buruh Malang (Malang Labour Group), Suciwati often met Munir, who was a labor lawyer at the Malang chapter of the Surabaya Legal Aid Institute.

They married in 1996 after he moved to Jakarta and began working at the Indonesian Legal Aid Foundation (YLBHI). She has a son, Soultan Alif Allende, 6, and daughter Diva Suukyi Larasati, 2.

Film icon

For her part, Diandra Paramitha Sastrowardoyo—better known as Dian Sastrowardoyo—started her career as a cover girl in Gadis teen magazine 10 years ago. Today, she is considered an icon in the Indonesian film industry.

And she's all of 23 years old. Dian began with a role in unsuccessful "Bintang Jatuh" (Falling Star) with director Rudi Sujarwo in 2000.

But her next film Pasir Berbisik (Whispering Sands) in 2001 boosted her popularity and won her the best actress award at the 15th Singapore International Film Festival and the Asian Film Festival in Deauville, France both in 2002.

Then followed a string of such awards and movie offers.

It may be trite and a cliché, but this beauty has brains too. Born in Jakarta in 1982, Dian is still a student at the University of Indonesia's school of philosophy, and dreams of becoming a philosopher.

"I want to teach at the school of philosophy," she mused.

-The Jakarta Post

TAKASHI Nagase

Quest for redemption

TOKYO—WHEN IN 1964 TAKASHI NAGASE returned to a cemetery close to Kanchanaburi Station, about 130 kilometers from Bangkok, he stood before a cross and prayed.

"I felt as if my guilty feelings were evaporating—feelings I'd kept inside for 20 years. That experience was the start of my mission," he said.

The cemetery holds the graves of about 7,000 Allied POWs killed during World War II. Nagase had joined the war at its height. At that time, the Imperial Japanese Army was constructing the Thai-Burma Railway to secure a land supply line to the war zone.

The railway was built by POWs from Australia, Britain, and the Netherlands, and Asian slave laborers, who are believed to have totaled 300,000.

It is estimated that 73,000 people died from malaria, dysentery and other diseases due to hard work, poor sanitary conditions and lack of nutrition.

As an interpreter, Nagase sometimes was obliged to be present at scenes of torture during interrogation.

After being repatriated to Japan, Nagase eventually opened a private English-language school in his native Kurashiki, Okayama Prefecture.

But soon after opening the school, he began to suffer fits, which made it difficult for him to breathe. He was diagnosed with autonomic ataxia, a nervous disorder that was an aftereffect of the war.

Reconciliation

His return to Kanchanaburi in 1964 not only cured him, but made him think more and more of reconciliation.

His first act was to invite students from Thailand to study in Japan. Then in 1976, Nagase met 23 former POWs who had worked on the Bridge over the River Kwai. The former POWs agreed to meet him despite strong opposition from groups of former British POWs.

The historic reunion was reported across the world and led to more reconciliations.

In 1986, Nagase built a temple called the River Kwai Peace Temple near the bridge. The construction was made possible with the royalties from the translation of books by former POWs and his own memoirs.

The same year, he set up the River Kwai Peace Foundation to assist the children of the poor families and of minority tribes in the mountains.

His present project is building a Japanese-language school in Kanchanaburi and getting the Bridge on the River Kwai designated a World Heritage Site.

This year, Nagase turned 87. He said with a smile: "I think I still have things to do."

- The Daily Yomiuri

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GMA forms group for flood measures

BAGUIO CITY—PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARroyo has tasked Malacañang's infrastructure and environment officials to design new measures against recurring floods that hit several provinces in the country.

Ms Arroyo, who visited Isabela on Friday, told reporters at The Mansion here that the government would need to respond properly to "aberrant" floods, which she blamed on global warming.

"The flood-threatened areas are the eastern seaboard of the country [which includes] Cagayan and Isabela provinces, Camarines Norte up to eastern Samar, Agusan, Surigao and Davao," Ms Arroyo said.

Retired Gen. Glen Rabonza, executive director of the National Disaster Coordinating Council (NDCC), said the new disaster management sessions will be thorough and may look into the potential impact of flooding on established and strategically important industries.

Rabonza said a key result of the meetings may be the relocation of vital institutions such as power facilities.

Some of the flooded regions host major hydroelectric power dams.

Ms Arroyo said Magat dam in Ramon, Isabela has not injured as many people as it used to because of calibrated flood control measures.

But she asked Isabela Gov. Maria Gracia Cielo Padaca to "make a strategic decision" regarding her province's corn industry.

Isabela supplies 22 percent of the country's average corn consumption, she said.

Chief Supt. Jefferson Soriano, Cagayan Valley regional police director and chair of the regional disaster coordinating council, said at least P263 million worth of crops were lost to floods that hit Isabela this month.

But Padaca said her province would continue producing corn, provided the national government shared half of the cost of building small impounding dams to contain the floods there.

In Cauayan City, Ms Arroyo released P40 million from the national calamity fund to aid 6,750 flood-stricken families in Isabela and 59,846 families in Cagayan.

In Cagayan, disaster management officials reported at least 54,930 hectares of corn farms were damaged. The losses were worth P296.85 million. *Vincent Cabreza and Villamor Visaya Jr., PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

ESPERANZA A. ESPEJO, CONTRIBUTOR

THEY are among the more than 439 poor residents in Siniloan town who availed themselves of the free haircut and beautification services on Dec. 30.

New look for Siniloan folk on New Year's

SINILOAN, LAGUNA—BARBERS AND hairdressers in this town on Friday joined hands in a "Free Haircut" campaign to give residents a new look for 2006.

The program, initiated by Mayor Gilmore de Leon Acero, benefited about 439 residents who are now sporting new hairdos.

Many waited for their turn to have a chance to look good and appear fresh in the New Year.

Greg Valdenarro, municipal administrator, said people usually give special attention to grooming, especially during Christmas and New Year but many poor people could not afford it, so the mayor launched the haircut project.

Marissa Mendoza, an eatery owner, said "Of course, it feels good to appear well-groomed even if life is difficult. Good fortune comes more easily if you welcome the New Year with a positive feeling."

Juli Delamines, one of the barbers who participated in the new hairdo project, said "I enjoyed this program of the mayor. Many had their hair cut; it was tiresome but I felt happy, knowing that I was helping others."

The free haircut was held at the Siniloan town plaza from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Dec. 30.

All barbers and beauticians in the town rendered their services for free. *Romulo Ponte, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

1 die, 14 wounded in Cotabato grenade attack

PIKIT, NORTH COTABATO—ONE person was killed while 14 others were hurt when two unidentified men on board a motorcycle lobbed two fragmentation grenades at a billiard hall here on Friday.

Pikit police chief investigator SPO4 Rudy Milagrosa said the twin explosions occurred at 2:25 p.m. inside Moler Buscato Billiard Hall located along the national highway.

A billiard tournament where players and bystanders bet on every game was in progress when the suspects arrived and tossed the explosives, Milagrosa said.

The suspects sped away after throwing the grenades, he added.

No one has claimed responsibility but police think that a quarrel over the tournament may have triggered the attack.

The billiard hall is about 200 meters away from the police station.

Killed was a certain David Tabdada. Wounded are Efren Bankot, Johnny Caballero, Ricky Veloso, Jomar Alcunera, Juan Carlos and Jeremiah Manon-og, Gary, Eddie and Marjo Sahid-sahid, Renante Ferrer, Buka Limpangan, Joven Lumagca, John and Norma Buscato, all residents of Poblacion Pikit.

Seven of the wounded were in critical condition. They were brought to the Cotabato Regional Medical Center. *Edwin O. Fernandez, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Army execs deny Bayan Muna killing

CEBU CITY—MILITARY OFFICIALS here described as unfair the accusations of militant groups that soldiers belonging to the 78th Infantry Battalion in mid-north Cebu were responsible for last Wednesday's murder of Bayan Muna barangay coordinator Allan Villacencio in Barangay Caridad, Tuburan.

Lt. Col. Jefferson Omandam, spokesperson for the Armed Forces of the Philippines' Central Command (Centcom), said militant groups should wait for the result of the investigation conducted by the police.

Lt. Col. Jessie Alvarez, commander of the 78th IB, also dismissed the allegation, saying the military does not kill noncombatants.

The Tuburan police have yet to establish the motive for the killing of Villacencio on Wednesday evening.

Two motorcycle-riding suspects, who were wearing baseball caps, shot Villacencio dead in front of his house in Barangay Caridad. Villacencio's wife, Myrna, said her husband had no enemy.

Omandam said the military would cooperate in the investigation if the police could get enough evidence to pinpoint the soldiers responsible in the murder of Villacencio.

He said Bayan, Karapatan and Kilusan ng Magbubukid ng Pilipinas should not make premature conclusion.

Karapatan, which conducted a fact-finding mission on Villacencio's death, claimed that soldiers who also allegedly tried to kill one of its members last November, were the ones who killed Villacencio.

Karapatan demanded the pullout of the 78th IB from Cebu, a call dismissed by Omandam, saying the military unit could not be pulled out from Cebu unless it is demanded by majority of Cebuanos.

Alvarez said he was not surprised by the allegations because militant groups had always blamed soldiers for every incident that happened to their members. *Jhunnex Napallacan, PDI Visayas Bureau*

ROUNDUP

P8M for 2 schools

YOU'RE WERCOME!

COTABATO CITY—The Japanese government has earmarked at least P8 million to construct a three-room building in two elementary schools in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao. Japanese Ambassador Ryuichiro Yamazaki and Gil Salazar, executive director of the Philippine Business for Social Progress, recently signed in Manila the agreement covering the upgrading of facilities of Silupah and Belatan Halo Elementary Schools in Panglima Sugala in Tawi-Tawi. The grant also provides for 364 desks and chairs and cabinets, among others. The two schools have only three classrooms for a total of 258 and 198 students respectively, and a limited number of chairs, forcing the students to sit on makeshift benches.
Jeoffrey Maitem, PDI Mindanao Bureau

MNLF community attacked

COTABATO CITY—Gunmen belonging to one of feuding families in Libungan, North Cotabato attacked a Moro National Liberation Front community on Tuesday evening and razed three houses, the military said Thursday. "The attackers also indiscriminately fired their guns, causing fear among Muslim and Christian residents in Barangay Malingen," said Maj. Gen. Agustin Demaala, commander of the Army's 6th Infantry Division. No one was injured, he said.
Jeoffrey Maitem, PDI Mindanao Bureau

901 held in Mimaropa

CAMP VICENTE LIM, Laguna—The Mimaropa Regional Police Office said it had arrested 901 persons involved in several criminal activities in the past 11 months. Mimaropa police director Chief Supt. Delfin Genio said their intensified operations against lawlessness netted a total of 623 most wanted persons from January to November. He said the police also detained 80 persons involved in the illegal numbers game, 34 suspected drug pushers and 71 individuals believed to be behind illegal logging. A total of 93 persons were also jailed for illegal fishing and illegal possession of explosives. Palawan topped the list with 497 arrested persons.
Marlon Ramos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Hijackers take P1M

BACOLOD CITY—Seven armed men hijacked a van in Pontevedra town, 48 kilometers south of here, Thursday and took away nearly P1 million in collection money. The delivery van of Columbia Marketing was on the road at Hacienda Carmenchika, Pontevedra, Negros Occidental at about 7 p.m., when its driver was forced to stop because of a tricycle blocking its way. Armed men in bonnets immediately surrounded the van, one of whom fired at the front of their vehicle, said Pontevedra police chief Insp. Mary Rose Salve Gaspillo. The driver-salesman, Charlemane Gargalicano, and his companion, Noel Jake Clamor, jumped out of the vehicle and escaped, while their companions who were following in a 10-wheeler truck sped away as the armed men also fired at their vehicle, Gaspillo said.
Carla P. Gomez, PDI Visayas Bureau

Palawan farmers find new income with bamboo floaters

PUERTO PRINCESA—INGENIOUS farmers in Roxas, Palawan have found an alternative source of livelihood arising from the floods by producing bamboo floaters or the traditional *balsa* to ferry passengers after a bridge here was washed out.

The opportunity for a new source of income came after a temporary footbridge built to replace the 90-meter bridge in Caramay, Roxas town that collapsed, also gave in due to continuous rains over the past weeks.

As a result, the *balsa* has been found useful to transport even light vehicles to the other side of the river in Caramay.

The bridge connects Roxas to far-flung municipalities in northern Palawan. Thanks to the *balsa*, residents from these areas, who are working in the capital city, could spend the holidays with their loved ones.

Link

The bridge also links Roxas to two tourist destinations, Taytay and El Nido. After the bridge was washed out, tourists have been advised to take the 18-seater planes from Puerto Princesa.

The plane ride, however, costs as much as the flight to Manila and is usually fully-booked on holidays.

At P5 per head, the ride on the *balsa* only takes about two minutes when the river is not rough. Each balsa is capable of transporting about 10 people in one trip.

Thousands of commuters, usually residents of northern Palawan, traders and tourists alike, use the *balsa* every day.

But a whopping P1,000 is charged for people who want their vehicles transferred to the other side.

Special watercraft

Nilo Badajos, owner of the *balsa* used to carry the vehicles, said he fashioned a special watercraft for this purpose.

He used hardwood planks for the flooring of his *balsa* instead of the less sturdy bamboo poles.

The special craft, which is tied on opposite ends using a cable wire, has about six empty drums below to keep it afloat.

Construction costs eat up a lot of expenses, he said, adding he has to provide for the number of men tasked to pull the floater to the other side as the vehicles are heavy.

Badajos said he was asked by the shuttle van operators to make the *balsa* because it would take sometime for the construction of a real bridge that could carry the vehicles.

Six or seven vehicles are transported every day using the balsa operated by Badajos.

The INQUIRER learned that the people getting extra income from the new trade are the farmers most affected by the heavy flooding during the past weeks.

Reports from the Provincial Disaster Coordinating Council showed that more than 6,000 people were evacuated due to the floods in northern Palawan.

A big number came from Roxas and Dumaran towns.

Footbridge

Because of the *balsa* enterprise, the Caramay riverbank has turned into a makeshift terminal. Residents sell an assorted stuff, from bottled mineral water to reading materials.

In a week's time, however, some of the *balsa* operators will be displaced as the Department of Public Works and Highways announced that a new footbridge will have been completed.

The detour bridge that could also carry vehicles will be constructed in two weeks time, the DPWH said.

Because of the access problem, a liter of gasoline in this town costs P51.

Some businessmen said they should not be blamed because it is hard to transport gasoline or crude oil using trucks.

The gasoline is transferred in barrels which cost P15 each when ferried through the bamboo floaters. *Jofelle P. Tesorio, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

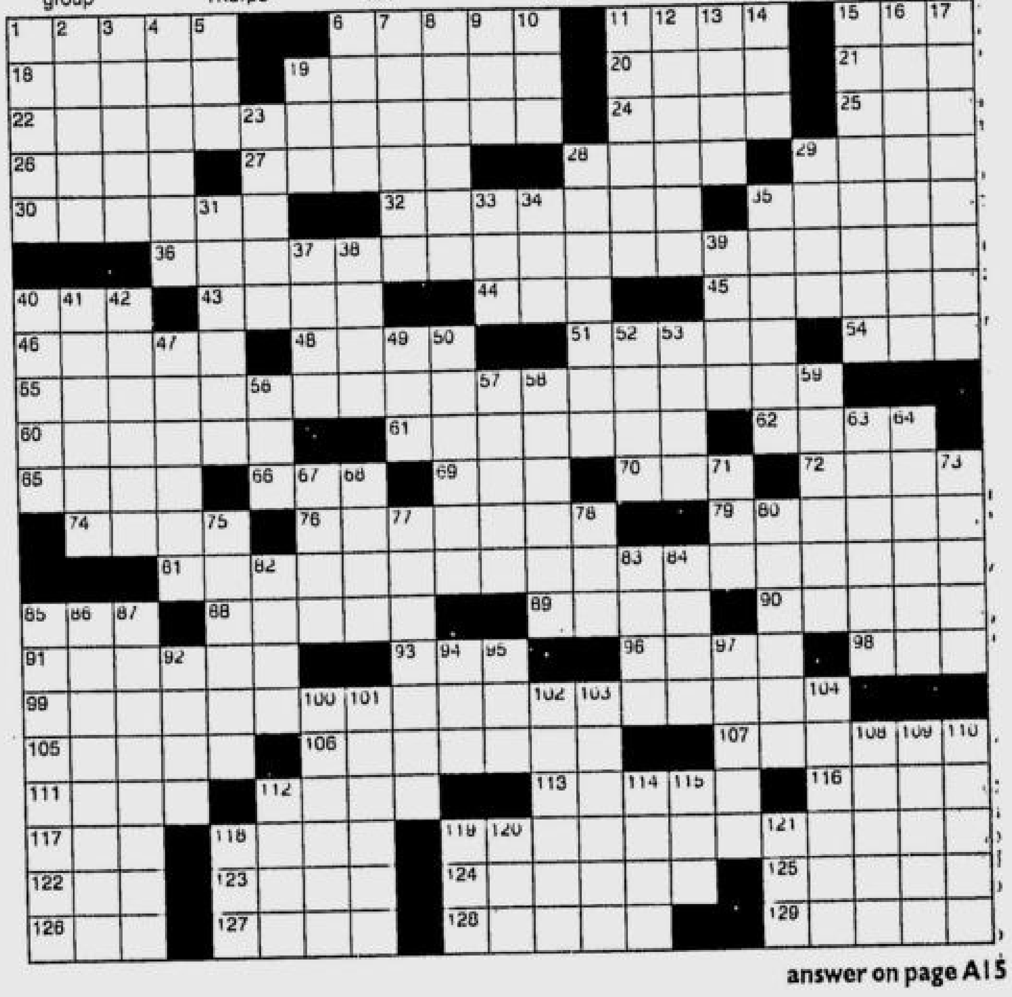
SUNDAY CROSSWORD

PREMIER CROSSWORD/ By Frank A. Longo

SYNE

ACROSS
1 "Peer Gynt" composer
6 Thin tufts
11 Stupefy
15 Rage
18 Summarize
19 Circus tent
20 Actor McGregor
21 Relaxing room
22 Start of a riddle
24 Rooftop pointer
25 Wide of the mark
26 Cake alternatives
27 Finish by
28 Karaoke singer's need
29 Drachma replacer
30 Tried hard
32 Newborn
35 Rabin won one
36 Riddle, part 2
40 Used to live
43 Queue past Q
44 Fed. cleanup group
45 Change the dimensions of
46 Suspect's story
48 Inquires
51 Gave medicine to
54 Turner of TV
55 Riddle, part 3
60 Kicked out of the country
61 Pet prettifier
62 Cash drawer
65 Small brook
66 — Paulo
69 Wrigley product
70 Charisse of MGM musicals
72 Finger part
74 Look as if
76 Coyote's home
79 Accepting of
81 Riddle, part 4
85 That man's
88 Cul- — (blind alley)
89 Part of APR
90 "— Hope" (old soap)
91 More bohemian
93 Propel a boat
96 Fleming and Thorpe
98 One-named R&B singer
99 End of the riddle
105 Used a prayer rug
106 Stormy
107 Tidy up
111 Vacillate
112 Worshiped one
113 Puzzle out
116 Lost clown fish of film
117 Scenery chewer
118 Left, at sea
119 Riddle's answer
122 "— you OK?"
123 Working diligently
124 Looking at
125 Material for overalls
126 Marry
127 Mob boss
128 Praline nut
129 Russian range

DOWN
1 Holds on to
2 Equip anew
3 More frigid
4 Consumes, biblically
5 Family MDs
6 Gale
7 Chameleon kin
8 — Island Ferry
9 "— favor!"
10 Secret agent
11 Danny of "Taxi"
12 Stop slumbering
13 "Titanic" co-star Billy
14 Yonkers-to-Stamford dir.
15 "Sounds unlikely to me"
16 Put in the icebox again
17 Wrapped up
19 Interdiction
23 Razzes
28 Road surface
29 Seemingly forever
31 Macho
33 Praiseful poem
34 Forty winks
35 "You — worry"
37 R.R. stops
38 Exclamation of disdain
39 Squirrel's hangout
40 Thin biscuit
41 Joan Collins' "Dynasty" role
42 "Sharp as a tack," e.g.
47 "Swan Lake," e.g.
49 Beer barrel
50 Western director Leone
52 11-mem. oil cartel
53 Nimble
56 Bradley and Begley
57 Rains hard
58 More cozy
59 Tough
63 Maryland suburb of D.C.
64 Liturgical prayer
67 Gibbons, e.g.
68 Black-and-white whale
71 "Zip-a-Dee- — -Dah"
73 A ton of, slangily
75 Humble
77 Booze
78 Socratic H
80 Chase after
82 Road shoulder
83 Big name in elevators
84 "Sure"
85 Detective
86 Pots, kettles, tools, etc.
87 Flowed in a steady current
92 In an inactive way
94 Ocean abbr.
95 Bread option
97 "Read my lips: — taxes"
100 ICU hookup
101 Florentine painter
102 With no assurance of profit
103 Paradise
104 Pelt processor
108 Pop singer — Marie
109 AOL notes
110 Benchmarks
112 Tiny amount
114 Actress Redgrave
115 Relax, slangily
118 — -Man (arcade classic)
119 Like a jazz cat
120 "All in favor" vote
121 Alternative to .com or .org



answer on page A15

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Bright prospects for Mindanao

By Germelita Lacorte
Davao City

OSCAR DIALANG, 46, looked at the roll of cardboard placed on his jeepney's panel board as he tried to make his way through the busy Bankerohan public market for Mintal, just two days before the New Year.

"Somebody gave me a calendar but it's just a cardboard," he said.

Dialang said he preferred the old calendars with 12 fluttering pages where the dates are written in big bold numbers and facts on low tides and high tides are specified.

But traders and small businesses scrimped on their budgets this year, so the budget for calendars was among the first casualty.

Linda Tesoro, general manager of the Tesoro printing press, said they noted declining orders for commercial calendars during the last three years.

Calendars may be taken for granted by some, but most people feel lost without a calendar, which serves as their temporal maps to navigate important dates of the year, according to Antonio Santos, chair of the Mindanao Business Council (MBC).

"That's the first thing you do when you wake up—look for a calendar. It's very important because you have to check on the banking days and the holidays," Santos said.

Despite the dampening effects of the oil price increases on the local economy last year, Santos was looking at the brighter side of the calendar this year.

Flicking through the glossy tabletop calendar in his office and glancing at another one on the wall, he said, there are many good things to look forward to in Mindanao in 2006.

These include the international business forum, where foreign companies will be coming to Davao City in August to look for investments opportunities.

Among the industries that Mindanao will promote in this gathering are mining, tourism and agribusiness, according to Santos.

The year 2006 is also the turn of the Philippines to chair the Brunei-Indonesia-Malaysia-Philippines (BIMP) Business Council in the East Asean Growth Area (Eaga), which is expected to spell good news for small and medium traders in Mindanao.

Underway is the German-assisted project under the BIMP Corp. for the export of *halal* chicken from Eaga to the Middle East. Last year, business and government sectors of the four BIMP countries agreed to put up the BIMP Corp. for the production and export of *halal* chicken to the Middle East.

Merly Cruz, regional director of the Department of Trade and Industry, also said the recent Asean summit brought good news to Mindanao, after oil-producing countries under the Eaga expressed the possibility of investing in oil storage facilities in Mindanao.

Joji Ilagan-Bian, the Mindanao representative to the country's Export Development Council, said the peace process must be pursued vigorously this year so that Mindanao can have a sustainable peace that will create a much better environment for business.

Santos said the only reason Brunei, Indonesia and Malaysia are hesitant to invest money is the peace problem.

"Once this is solved, I don't think we'll have any problem inviting our neighbors in the BIMP," he said.

Cruz is more optimistic, saying the economy starts to move up as the value of the peso strengthens.

She said among the things to look forward to this year is the Asean Tourism Forum in Davao on the second week of January.

It is expected to bring in 3,000 tourists from Asean countries, according to Art Boncato, chair of the Davao Tourism Association.

WE♥

SEAG Team Philippines,
Manny Pacquiao, the OFW's,
Precious Lara Quigaman,
Coconets inventor
Dr. Justino Arboleda,
doctors who've decided
to stay in the Philippines
like Drs. Macapodi, Vidar,
Decampong and Guinal,
Lea Salonga and all the people
who gave honor to our country
in 2005.

Thank you for making it
easy for us to fill our
pages with good news.
We wish to have more in 2006.
Happy New Year.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

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Manila youth clean up act, city streets

By Margaux C. Ortiz

THANKS TO A GOVERNMENT program, hundreds of out-of-school youth in Manila are cleaning up their act, and in the process, the city as well.

Armed with brooms, dustpans and sacks, neighbors Danilo Magampo and Mark Batista stand each afternoon in front of the Manila Police District (MPD) headquarters, subjecting themselves to what they call "military-style training."

From being a concept that was alien to them several months ago, the two have learned the importance of punctuality or reporting for work on time.

"We are required to turn up at the police headquarters before our 2 to 10 p.m. shift for instructions," 25-year-old Magampo, a resident of Onyx Street, Paco, said in Filipino.

Program for the youth

The two are Out-of-school Youth Serving Toward Economic Recovery (Oyster) members, a program for out-of-school youth being sponsored by the MPD and Department of Public Works and Highways.

Magampo said that before he joined the program last October, discipline was the least of his priorities.

"I got involved in many illegal activities with my friends because my life had no direction then," Magampo said. "I used drugs whenever I could and even went to jail once."

When his godmother encouraged him to become an Oyster, he was initially incredulous.

"Of course, I was used to my old lifestyle and I thought I was getting along just fine," Magampo said.

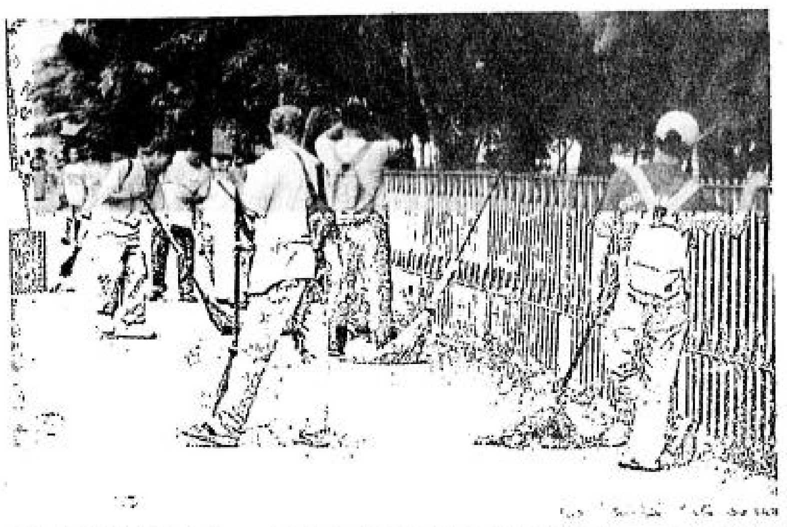
But when he mulled over his future, he decided to give it a try.

Life-changing decision

"It turned out to be the best decision I've made so far," Magampo said, smiling. He added that with his daily salary, he was able to purchase a bicycle that he now uses in going to work every day.

Batista, 27, could not agree more.

"I used to sell drugs in our street to get by," Batista said. But since joining the program, he has discovered the value of "clean and dignified work."



OUT-OF-SCHOOL youth in Manila get a second chance. REM ZAMORA

"Of course, I'm not going to pretend that overhauling my life was easy, especially with all the temptations around," he added.

Magampo and Batista are just two of the 883 Oyster members tasked to take care of Manila's "investors' corridor," according to Oyster program supervisor Senior Supt. Gil de Castro.

De Castro explained that a memorandum of agreement between the DPWH and MPD last Oct. 27 paved the way for the recruitment of out-of-school youth, the unemployed and underemployed in Manila's depressed barangays.

The newly hired Oysters were then deployed in the city's main roads and thoroughfares like Roxas Boulevard, Quirino Avenue, Osmeña Highway, Ayala-Burgos Streets, Nagtahan Bridge and Ramon Magsaysay Boulevard—Manila's "show window" for tourists and VIPs.

"The Oysters' first major task was to keep these areas clean and orderly for the Southeast Asian Games last November," De Castro said.

Oyster members are paid a daily salary of P231.

"In order to ensure that the streets are kept clean at all times, the Oysters are divided into three shifts: from 6 a.m. to 2 p.m., 2 p.m. to 10 p.m., and 10 p.m. to 6 a.m.," the program supervisor said.

Members at risk

However, De Castro said working for the program also meant risks.

"We have had many Oysters who were stoned and mauled by bystanders and vagrants," he recalled.

In one instance, a member who was quietly sweeping the vicinity of Plaza Dilao was stabbed by a bored vagrant.

To solve this problem, De Castro requested the police station commanders to provide round-the-clock security to Oyster members.

"It's a good thing that the danger failed to dampen the determined spirits of the program members," he said.

Aside from providing them with a regular source of income, being an Oyster has also changed the lifestyle of many of the program's members.

"They could not drink the night away anymore especially if they are assigned to the early morning shift," De Castro said, laughing. "This job has taught them to be disciplined."

Batista explained that his old friends and neighbors were initially skeptical of his "transformation."

"They could not believe that I chose this job over an easier life and even said that I would only use the money I earn to finance my vices," he said.

Rafael Sorio, 28, of Quirino Avenue, said he had to deal with his neighbors' taunts and lack of support for his new life.

"Whenever I would go out of the house with my broom and in my Oyster uniform, they would guffaw and say I look ridiculous," Sorio said.

But Batista and Sorio said they have become used to ignoring these insults, saying they "know better than to give in."

"Changing into a better and more productive person requires a lot of effort," Sorio said. "We cannot just throw it all away."

Inmates' pardon questioned

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

OLD AND SICKLY INMATES OF THE CORRECTIONAL Institute for Women who had been pardoned may be welcoming the New Year with relief and happiness, but an anti-crime group is not amused.

The Volunteers Against Crime and Corruption (VACC) is seeking a review of the conditional pardons President Macapagal-Arroyo had granted more than 30 prisoners this year.

"We want a review of all those conditional pardons. We will be coordinating with the Department of Justice," VACC chair Dante Jimenez said.

"(It doesn't mean that) because they are old, they should no longer serve their full sentence," he added.

But prison director Rachel Ruelo said the inmates should be given a chance to spend their remaining years with their families.

"Those granted pardon are already very old and sickly. They have been inside the prison for several years," Ruelo added.

Laya Ka Na Lola chair Liza Elorde also said pardoning the elderly and ailing inmates was a way to decongest the institute.

"There were inmates who had died because of old age inside the jail, without even seeing their relatives. We don't want that to happen again," Elorde, whose group has been working for the pardon of old inmates since 2003, added.

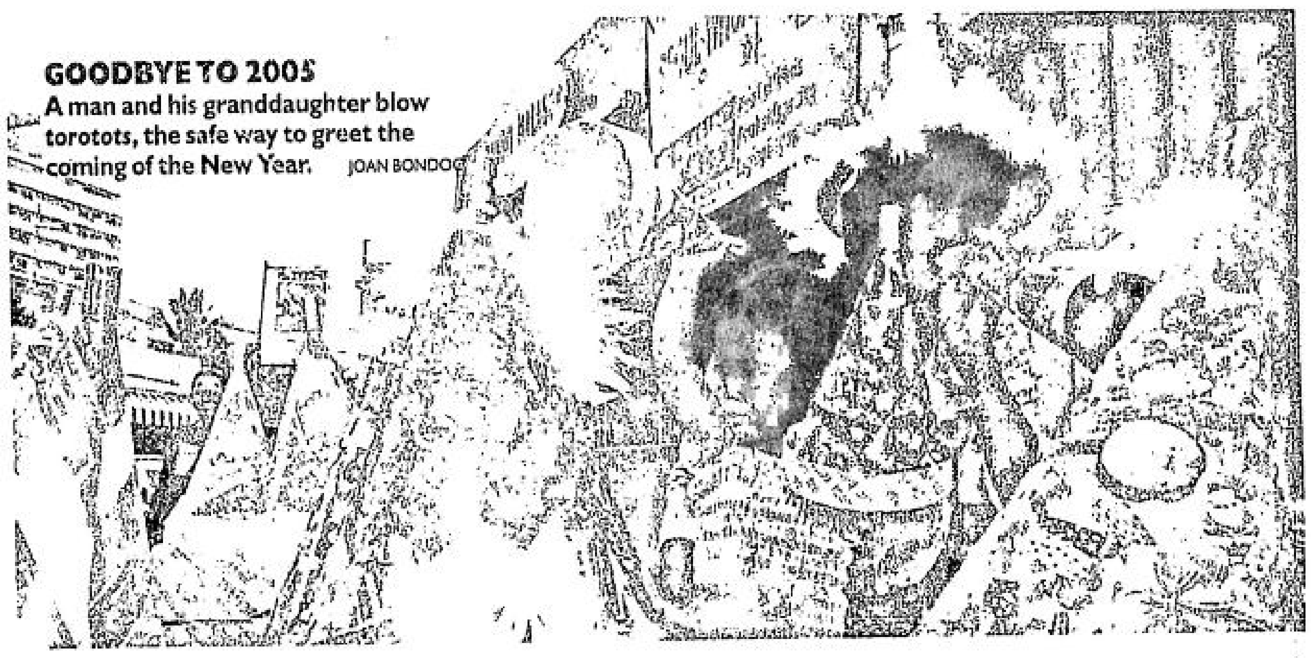
Last Friday, 11 inmates stepped out of the prison compound in Mandaluyong City after an emotional thanksgiving Mass. They were the latest batch of old and ailing inmates to whom Ms Arroyo had given executive clemency.

"We will monitor all of them. We will review their cases, including their medical examinations," Jimenez said.

His group has been opposing the new policy of granting conditional pardon to sickly inmates and those above 70 years old.

"The policy has dangerous implications. Not only does it bring anguish to the victims, but (it) also exposes us to retaliation," Jimenez had said in an earlier interview.

He said the policy was also prone to abuses.



GOODBYE TO 2005
A man and his granddaughter blow torotots, the safe way to greet the coming of the New Year. JOAN BONDOC

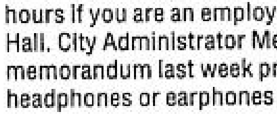
METROBRIEFS

Ban on earphones

THEY may look hip and sound cool. However, earphones should not be used during working hours if you are an employee at the Marikina City Hall. City Administrator Melvin Cruz issued a memorandum last week prohibiting the use of headphones or earphones during office hours. "We have observed that many employees are wearing headphones during office hours. That is not part of the uniform. That is not part of their jobs," Cruz told the INQUIRER. Headphones are usually attached to pocket radios, iPods and even cell phones equipped with MP3 players and radio. Earphones are also used to take cell phone calls even without holding the receiver. "I think wearing headphones hampers work already. It also (reduces) concentration," Cruz said. Copies of the memorandum have already been posted in most of the offices at the City Hall. The restriction takes effect during working hours only, so employees can use headphones during lunch break or after work, Cruz said. Those who refuse to follow the memorandum will be reprimanded for "violating office rules," he added.

Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

Easy tax payment


MAS CONVENIENT!

BY NEXT year, paying one's taxes can be done over the counter in Quezon City. The city government has accredited a number of banks to accept payments of business, real property and other taxes from residents in a renewed drive for higher collections. Accredited banks include the Landbank of the Philippines, Development Bank of the Philippines, Philippine National Bank, Philippine Veterans Bank and Union Bank. The five banks were authorized by the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, and were thus given priority in the applications for accreditation, according to city treasurer Victor Endriga. He said the partnership with banks would help expand the city's tax base and curb fraudulent payments, since only cash and manager's checks would be accepted. In a letter to the City Council, the treasurer cited the need to "shorten complicated transactions, and minimize if not eradicate scrupulous transactions." This, he said, can help ensure an "effective, efficient and expeditious system" of receiving dues from taxpayers, who need no longer line up at City Hall to settle their obligations. Earlier, Endriga reported that the city had posted a budget surplus of P242 million, as of Dec. 22.

DJ Yap

Suicide or foul play?

AN ABS-CBN assistant director was found dead inside her car Friday night in Quezon City, two days after a cameraman from the same TV network was shot dead by unidentified gunmen. In what police suspect was a suicide, Sheila Periwinkle Soncuya, 29, was discovered with a gunshot wound in her left temple and a .38-caliber revolver in her left hand. Her body was found in the driver's seat of her black Mitsubishi Lancer, with plate number TKK-807. The car was parked at the corner of Cornelian and Jade Streets near the club house of North View 1 Subdivision, Batasan Hills. PO2 Roldan Cruz of the Batasan Hills Police Station said Nelson Trias, a subdivision maintenance crew member, discovered the body at 1:15 p.m. In his report, Supt. Julius Caesar Abanes said it could be a case of suicide, though police said they would also investigate possible foul play in Soncuya's death. Another ABS-CBN employee, cameraman Roberto Ramoya, 40, had been gunned down by two motorcycle-riding assailants Wednesday night.

DJ Yap

ANSWER TO SUNDAY CROSSWORD

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New kickoff slant set for All-Filipino

By June Navarro

THE PHILIPPINE BASKETBALL Association never runs out of crowd-drawing gimmicks.

For the opening of the 2006 All-Filipino Cup, the league is planning to do away with the common practice of parading the teams and the pregame festivities on March 9 at the Araneta Coliseum.

Instead, the crowd will be treated to a single "midnight game" pitting teams with a solid fan base which will be played around nine in the evening and end before midnight.

After the game, the Big Dome would be converted into one big party arena.

"We're still in the planning stages but we have already sounded off the entities whose support could prove valuable for this undertaking," PBA media chief Willie Marcial told the INQUIRER.

A tie-up with MTV Asia has been sealed with the music entertainment outfit expected to bring in the best local bands for the concert hosted by the top VJs in the country after the game.

Marcial said the entire ringside area would be turned into a giant cocktail bar serving free food and drinks for special guests and the fans. Just like in the NBA, alcoholic beverages will also be served during the game, he added.

Under commissioner Noli Eala, the league has explored several marketing strategies to lure back the crowd, but this is the first time a party-like affair will cap the opening program.

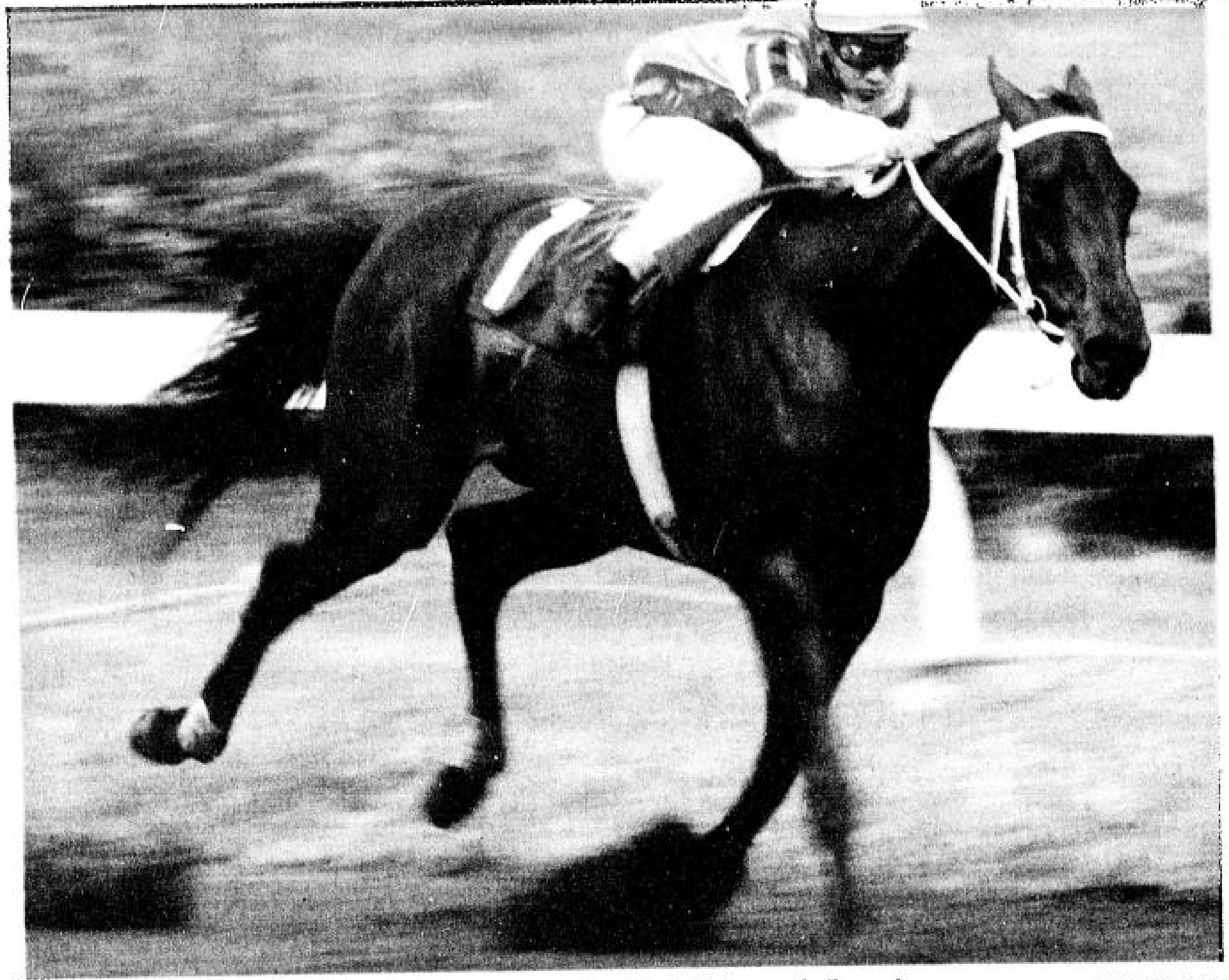
With an appetite for innovation, Eala has also led the league to alter its calendar and synchronize the schedule for the training and exposure of the national team.

Meanwhile, Red Bull Barako and Barangay Ginebra will dispute the remaining semifinal slot when the San Mig Coffee-PBA Fiesta Conference resumes on Wednesday at the Cuneta Astrodome.

Red Bull and Ginebra are hoping to join the Purefoods Chunkee Giants, who advanced into the best-of-seven semifinals by virtue of a league-leading 10-6 record after the elimination round.

The loser grabs the top quarterfinal slot with Air21 and Talk 'N Text disputing the other premium quarterfinal seat.

A slot in the best-of-three wildcard phase will go to the loser of the Express-Phone Pals clash.



WILD Orchid, handled by Fernando Raquel Jr., approaches the finish line unchallenged. EDWIN BACASMAS

STA ANA CHAMPIONSHIP

Wild Orchid triumphs again, ends year in smashing style

By Musong R. Castillo

THE WINNING jockey relishes the feel of yet another racing victory. EDWIN BACASMAS

WILD ORCHID thumped an overmatched field yesterday to win the Santa Ana Park championship by six lengths over Sound Offer and put an exclamation point to one of the most overpowering track campaigns ever.

The three-year-old bay filly equaled a track mark for the second straight week, clocking 1 minute and 52.6 seconds for the victory over 1,800 meters worth another P500,000 for owner Ed Moreno.

The time actually matched the all-comers' mark she jointly holds with Being There, who checked in third yesterday.

Fernando Raquel Jr. guided Wild Orchid to her 12th win in 19 career starts and it came exactly seven days after the New Zealand-bred filly dispatched Real Spicy in the Classic Open Stakes for P1 million at the San Lazaro Park in Carmona, clocking 2:04.5 over 2,000 meters.

Raquel spurred Wild Orchid behind Being There three quarters of the race before picking off the speedball at the far turn. He then applied the whip a number of times in the final straight for insurance.

Being There, the second choice, broke out hard from stall No. 4 but never got the benefit of setting the pace by the rail with Raquel wheeling Wild Orchid, who occupied No. 1, immediately into the fight.

Flagged off as the outstanding favorite with sales of more than P1.488 million out of the total daily double pool of close to P1.6, Wild Orchid churned out eye-popping quarter clockings of 13-22-25-25-27.

Sound Offer, a progeny of Kentucky Derby winner Thunder Gulch out of What an Offer, won P120,000 for her second place finish, while Being There settled for P70,000.

Pine Needles brought out the rear and finished out of the money.

Meanwhile, distant fourth pick Native Prince rallied mightily in the far turn later in the afternoon to nip Top Of D' Line by half a length in the 2005 Philracom Pasasalamat Sa Bayang Karerista.

Class B jockey CP Henson steered the five-year-old colt to the win worth P210,000, while Top Of D' Line pocketed P78,750 with favorite Prima Vera checking in third for P43,750.

Morales shifts to speed training; Pacman ready

MEXICAN SUPERSTAR ERIK MORALES, now done with the strength aspect of his training at the Queretaro Mountains off Mexico City, shifts to speed training as he steps up his buildup for his Jan. 21 rematch with Filipino champion Manny Pacquiao at the Thomas and Mack Center in Las Vegas.

Reports coming out of Morales' training camp revealed that in addition to the already formidable cast of sparmates being drafted by his promoters, one more young-gun will be brought in this week to help prepare the Tijuana native develop his speed in order to neutralize Pacquiao's perceived advantage in that area.

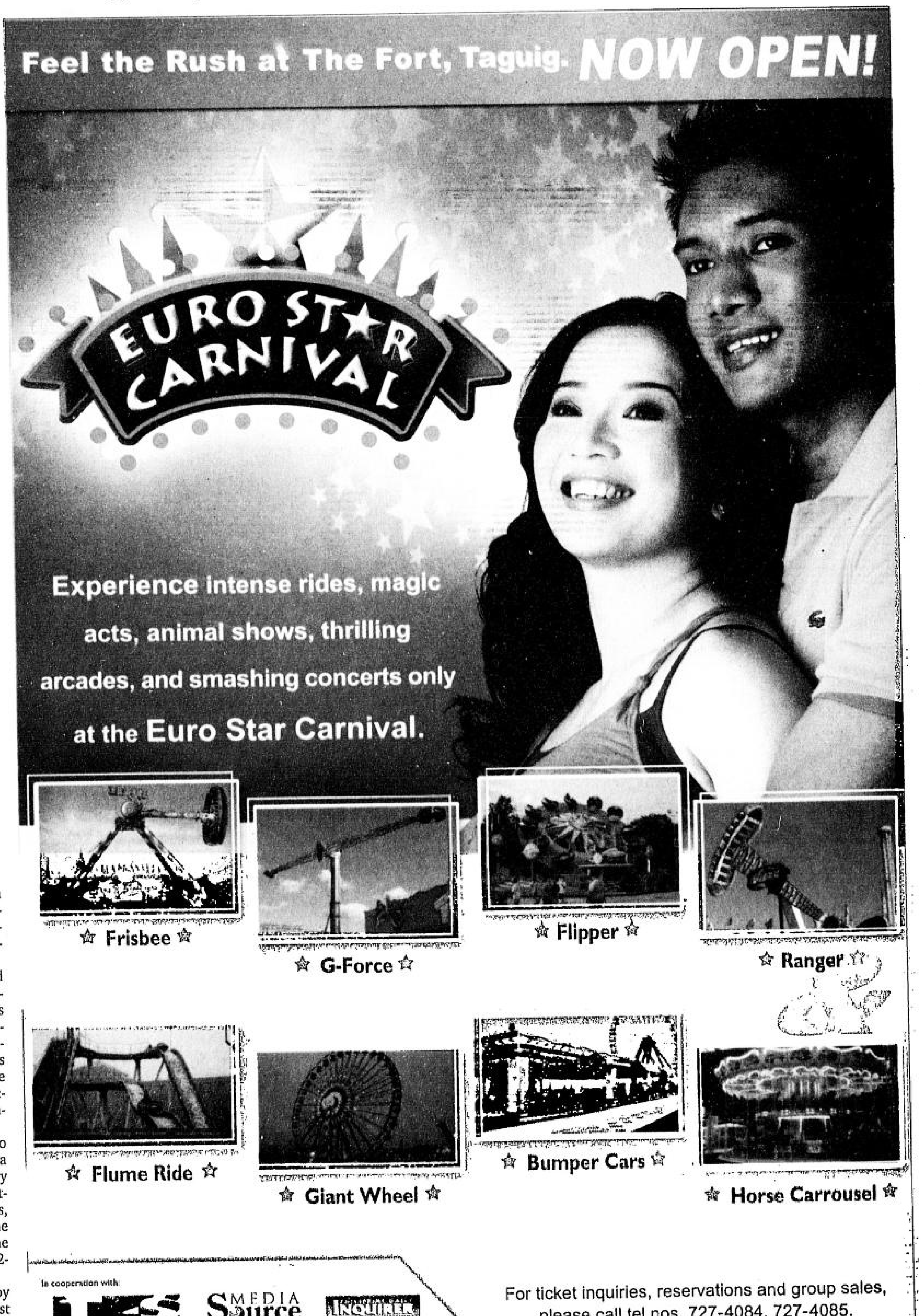
Yesterday, Morales made his last run up the hills of Cristo Rey, the last strength session to be conducted by the Mexican gladiator.

This week, 21-year-old southpaw lightweight Abraham Esquivel, an undefeated prospect who is as tall as Pacquiao, has been tasked to provide Morales a challenge at speed during sparring sessions supervised by trainer Jose Luis Lopez and conditioning coach Raul Robles.

Meanwhile, over at the Wild Card Gym in Los Angeles, Pacquiao continued to keep his cards close to his chest, opting not to reveal specific details of his preparation and only hinting that he is getting the best training as the gym is now free from all distractions from fans and his old management team.

Freddie Roach, according to Pacquiao when interviewed by a leading website, has been very busy devising the right fight strategy to be used against Morales, and that they are working on the plan of keeping Morales on the defensive all throughout their 12-round duel.

Morales beat Pacquiao by unanimous decision in their first meeting last March. *Salven L. Lagumbay, contributor*



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9 BLUE MOON
10 MULAWIN THE MOVIE
11 EXODUS
12 LAGOT KA SA KUYA KO

SM CITY STA. MESA
1 AKO LEGAL WIFE
2 EXODUS
3 MULAWIN THE MOVIE
4 SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL 2K5
5 ENTENG KABISOTE 2
6 ENTENG KABISOTE 2
7 MULAWIN THE MOVIE
8 MOURNING GIRLS
9 BLUE MOON
10 LAGOT KA SA KUYA KO

SM CITY BICUTAN
1 ENTENG KABISOTE 2
2 BLUE MOON
3 MULAWIN
4 EXODUS

SM VALENZUELA
NOW OPEN
1 ENTENG KABISOTE 2
2 MULAWIN THE MOVIE
3 EXODUS
4 BLUE MOON

SM CITY FAIRVIEW
1 MULAWIN THE MOVIE
2 LAGOT KA SA KUYA KO
3 KUTOB
4 SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL 2K5
5 MOURNING GIRLS
6 ENTENG KABISOTE 2
7 EXODUS
8 MULAWIN THE MOVIE
9 BLUE MOON
10 AKO LEGAL WIFE
11 ENTENG KABISOTE 2
12 EXODUS

SM CITY SOUTHMALL
1 BLUE MOON
2 MOURNING GIRLS
3 ENTENG KABISOTE 2
4 BLUE MOON
5 EXODUS
6 ENTENG KABISOTE 2
7 AKO LEGAL WIFE
8 MULAWIN THE MOVIE
9 SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL 2K5
10 KUTOB

SM SUPERCENTER SUCAT
1 BLUE MOON
2 ENTENG KABISOTE 2
3 EXODUS
4 SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL 2K5

SM CITY NORTH EDSA
1 AKO LEGAL WIFE
2 ENTENG KABISOTE 2
3 ENTENG KABISOTE 2
4 SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL 2K5
5 MOURNING GIRLS
6 BLUE MOON
7 MULAWIN THE MOVIE
8 EXODUS

SM CITY MANILA
1 MOURNING GIRLS
2 EXODUS
3 KUTOB
4 ENTENG KABISOTE 2
5 SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL 2K5
6 MULAWIN THE MOVIE
7 BLUE MOON
8 AKO LEGAL WIFE
9 ENTENG KABISOTE 2
10 MULAWIN THE MOVIE
11 EXODUS
12 LAGOT KA SA KUYA KO

SM SAN LAZARO
1 EXODUS
2 BLUE MOON
3 SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL 2K5
4 MULAWIN THE MOVIE
5 AKO LEGAL WIFE
6 ENTENG KABISOTE 2

LUZON

SM CITY PAMPANGA
1 MULAWIN THE MOVIE
2 EXODUS
3 BLUE MOON
4 MOURNING GIRLS
5 AKO LEGAL WIFE
6 ENTENG KABISOTE 2

SM CITY BAGUIO
1 BLUE MOON
2 AKO LEGAL WIFE
3 MULAWIN THE MOVIE
4 ENTENG KABISOTE 2

SM MOLINO
NOW OPEN
1 MULAWIN THE MOVIE
2 EXODUS
3 BLUE MOON
4 ENTENG KABISOTE 2

SM CITY BACOOR
1 LAGOT KA SA KUYA KO
2 AKO LEGAL WIFE
3 ENTENG KABISOTE 2
4 MULAWIN THE MOVIE
5 EXODUS
6 BLUE MOON
7 SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL 2K5
8 MOURNING GIRLS

SM CITY MARILAO
1 ENTENG KABISOTE 2
2 MULAWIN THE MOVIE
3 BLUE MOON
4 AKO LEGAL WIFE

SM CITY DASMARINAS
1 EXODUS
2 KING KONG
3 BLUE MOON
4 ENTENG KABISOTE 2

SM CITY LUCENA
1 ENTENG KABISOTE 2
2 MULAWIN THE MOVIE
3 BLUE MOON
4 EXODUS

SM CITY BATANGAS
1 KING KONG
2 EXODUS
3 ENTENG KABISOTE 2
4 BLUE MOON

VISAYAS AND MINDANAO

SM CITY CEBU
1 AKO LEGAL WIFE
2 KING KONG
3 ENTENG KABISOTE 2
4 MULAWIN THE MOVIE
5 BLUE MOON
6 LAGOT KA SA KUYA KO
7 MOURNING GIRLS
8 EXODUS

SM CITY ILOILO
1 EXODUS
2 LAGOT KA SA KUYA KO
3 MOURNING GIRLS
4 BLUE MOON
5 MULAWIN THE MOVIE
6 KING KONG
7 ENTENG KABISOTE 2
8 AKO LEGAL WIFE

SM CITY DAVAO
1 EXODUS
2 KING KONG
3 MOURNING GIRLS
4 BLUE MOON
5 ENTENG KABISOTE 2
6 AKO LEGAL WIFE

SM CITY CAGAYAN DE ORO
1 KING KONG
2 AKO LEGAL WIFE
3 MULAWIN THE MOVIE
4 SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL 2K5

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10:20 12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10.00
3 ENTENG KABISOTE
12:00 2:30 5:00 7:30 10:00
4 KUTOB
12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00
5 SHAKE, RATTLE and ROLL
10:20 12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00
6 MULAWIN
12.00 2.30 5:00 7:30 10:00
7 TERRORIST HUNTER
12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00
8 EXODUS
12:10 2:30 4:50 7:10 9:30
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CITISQUARE MALABON 288-2575
1 SHAKE, RATTLE and ROLL
2 EXODUS
3 RESERVE
4 RESERVE

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4 MULAWIN

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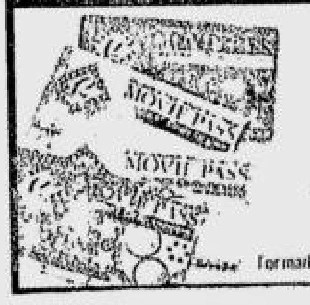

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Abapo retains crown

TALIBON, BOHOL—Philippine junior welterweight champion Bart Abapo retained his title Friday evening, stopping challenger Rex Marzan in the sixth round of the "Rambolan sa Talibon" at the jampacked CPG Multi-Purpose Gym here.

Abapo, working behind a crisp left jab and high-precision right straight, befuddled the heavy-handed Marzan, whose face was a gory mess when the fight was halted in 1 minute 11 seconds of the sixth.

The reigning champ opened a nasty cut over Marzan's left eyelid in the second round with a legitimate punch and after physician Jose Unabia ordered the fight to resume, Abapo wasted no time toying with Marzan from there.

By the sixth, Marzan was a badly battered fighter and Unabia advised referee Teddy Alivio to halt the fight.

Abapo, making the first defense of the title, received the championship trophy from Talibon Mayor Juanario Item and promoter Sammy "Don King" Gello-ani.

In the chief support, Donnie Nietes outclassed Allan Dugang to win by unanimous decision.

Danny Boy Bontilao prevailed over Roland Econas, while Edwin Gastador edged out Ronald Postrano by decision. *Salven Lagumbay, Contributor*

Quitara upsets Solon

TIM POLERO TRIPPED downed twin brother Kim, 0-6, 6-4, 10-3, to rule the boys' 12-under division yesterday while Zhane Quitara scored an upset in the 2005 Milo Junior Tennis Cup and Regional Workshop at the Philam Homes Tennis Club.

Quitara pushed highly-favored Macy Solon to a third set super tiebreak for a 6-3, 0-6, 11-9 upset victory in the girls' 16-under class in the event organized by the CTW and supported by Adidas with Philta sanction.

Cebu netter Kristel Buenacosa edged Chynna Mamawal, 6-2, 2-6, 10-7, to bag the girls' 14-under title and Jam Rabuya of Galas Tennis Club overcame Nica Sasil, 4-6, 6-1, 10-6, to take home the girls' 18-under trophy.

In the girls' 12-under event, Micah Tampoco nipped JV Custodio, 7-5, 6-3, for the crown.

Enrique Ferrer whipped Vince Salas, 6-3, 6-3, to top the unisex 10-under; Leander Lazaro downed Kyle Cordero, 6-2, 2-6, 10-8, for the boys' 14-under title; El Santo Santos edged Francis Largo, 6-3, 1-6, 10-8, in the boys' 16-under; and Marvin Serito scored a 6-2, 3-6, 10-6 win over Juv Alban for the boys' 18-under title.

Carter keeps Nets streak burning

EAST RUTHERFORD, NEW JERSEY—VINCE CARTER SCORED 37 points as the New Jersey Nets won their eighth straight game, defeating the Atlanta Hawks, 99-91, in National Basketball Association play on Friday.

Jason Kidd added 21 points and had nine assists for the Nets, who are on the fourth-longest winning streak in franchise history after a poor start to the season.

"Everybody is committed to this team," Carter told reporters after the game. "We've turned things around."

New Jersey (17-12) now has six days off before playing its next game as the Nets continue to improve after losing 12 of their first 21 games this season.

The latest win wasn't easy, as the stubborn Hawks hung around until late in the fourth quarter in a game that featured 25 lead changes.

"They (the Hawks) are playing hard and we've been in every game we've played this year," said Atlanta coach Mike Woodson.

Richard Jefferson also scored 21 points for the Nets, who didn't take the lead for good until reserve guard Jacque Vaughn hit a jumper with 4:53 remaining.

In Dallas, Baron Davis scored 34 points as the Golden State Warriors nipped the Mavericks, 111-109.

Jason Richardson added 32 points and Troy Murphy scored 18 points and added 14 rebounds for the Warriors.

Dirk Nowitzki scored 24 points and Jerry Stackhouse added 19 points for the Mavericks.

The loss dropped the Mavericks to 21-8, ending their hopes of overtaking reigning NBA champion San Antonio for the Southwest division lead before the arrival of 2006.

Golden State trailed by as many as 14 points and faced a 103-93 deficit with 5:36 remaining before Davis sank back-to-back 3-pointers to ignite the Warriors' rally.

"I was in a good groove tonight and I was more aggressive," Davis said. "A lot of those shots that I was making before the game, I was able to get to go down during the game."

At the end, Davis was dribbling just beyond the 3-point arc. He faked a move to the basket that prompted Dallas guard Marquis Daniels to move back, clearing room for the winning basket.

"Everybody in the gym knew I was going to drive the ball," Davis said. "Once I got (Daniels) on his heels, I was able to rock him. I was then able to get my feet up under me and get good lift on my shot."

Dallas set up a final shot but Jason Terry's desperation baseline shot bounced off the back of the rim at the final buzzer.

"Its hard to win a game in this league when you give up 111 points even though I felt like we scored enough points to win the game," Nowitzki said.

"We had too many turnover down the stretch and they got a couple long rebounds there at the end and made some big threes down the stretch."

The Warriors rose to 16-14 to edge past the Los Angeles Lakers for third in the Pacific division.

"Baron is a superstar and I am an up-and-coming star and there will be games where we will have to step our game up and carry the team like that," said Richardson.

"Tonight was just one of those nights where he had it going and I had it going so it just ended up being us that stepped up to help us win this game."

In Orlando, Jameer Nelson scored 25 points as the Magic beat the Minnesota Timberwolves, 107-87.

Dwight Howard scored 17 points and had 12 rebounds and Steve Francis added 21 points for the Magic.

In Indianapolis, Charlie Villanueva scored 25 points and had 10 rebounds as the Toronto Raptors beat the Indiana Pacers 99-97.

Chris Bosh added 22 points and had 12 rebounds for the Raptors.

In Washington, Dwyane Wade scored 34 points as the Miami Heat beat the Wizards, 128-113.

Shaquille O'Neal added 28 points and had 10 rebounds for the Heat.

Gilbert Arenas scored 47 points and Antawn Jamison added 20 points for the Wizards.

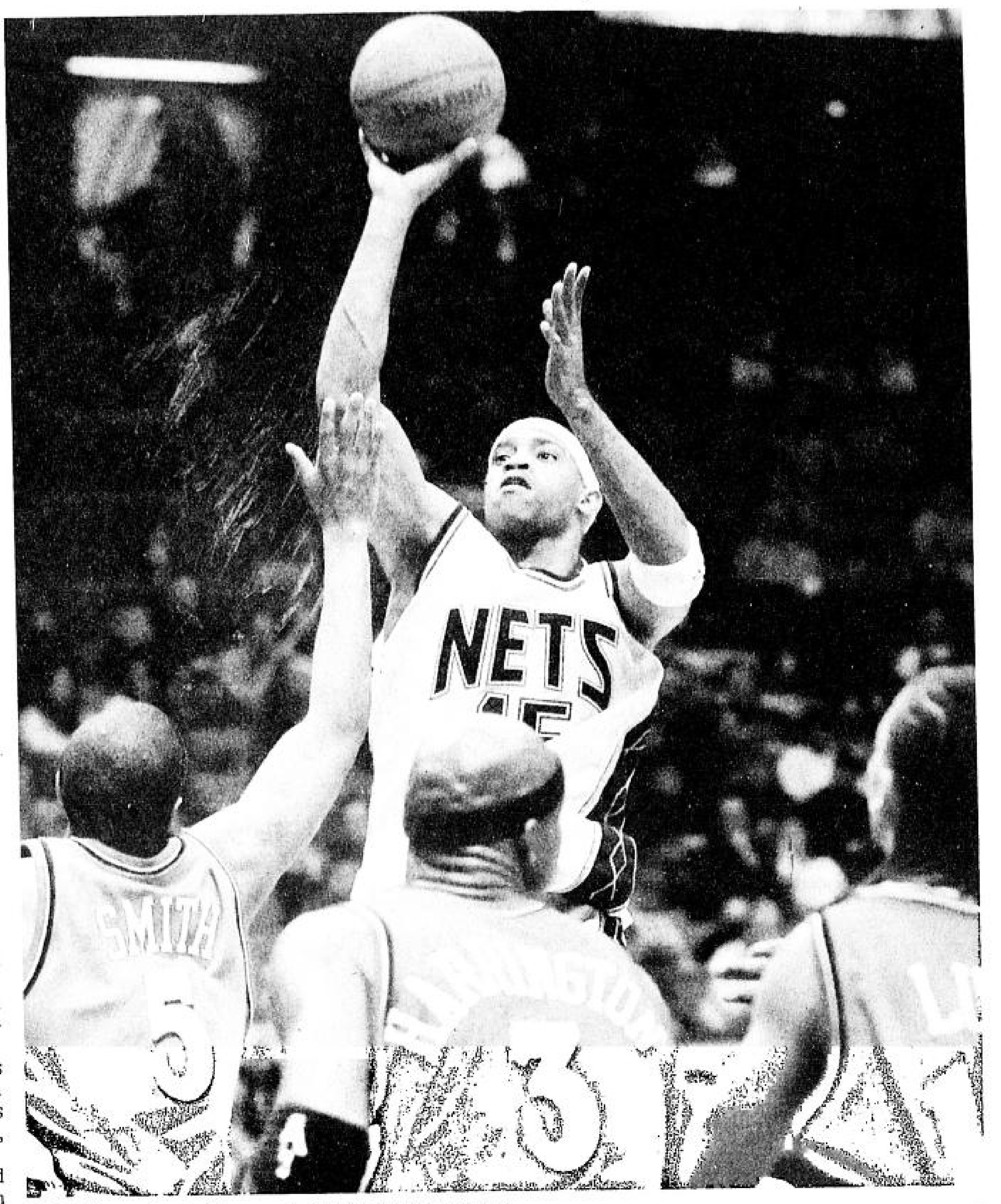
In Charlotte, Steve Nash scored 24 points and had 13 assists as the Phoenix Suns beat the Bobcats, 110-100.

In Milwaukee, Mo Williams scored 30 points as the Bucks beat the New York Knicks, 113-108.

In Portland, Mike Miller scored 23 points as the Memphis Grizzlies edged the Trail Blazers, 93-90.

In Sacramento, Mike Bibby had 33 points and had 10 assists as the Kings stopped the Boston Celtics, 116-112.

Reuters, AFP



VINCE Carter rises to the occasion for the New Jersey Nets. AP

Kobe suspended for flagrant foul

NEW YORK—THE NBA SUSPENDED KOBE Bryant for two games without pay Friday for elbowing Memphis forward Mike Miller in the throat during the Los Angeles Lakers' 101-99 loss on Wednesday.

Bryant was called for a flagrant foul with 8:24 to play for elbowing Miller. He is scheduled to serve his suspension Sunday, when the Lakers host Utah, and Tuesday, when Los Angeles plays at the Jazz.

"Very surprised. Shocked, actually. Very, very surprised," Bryant said after practice Friday. "Angry and frustrated. I've been hit with a couple of flagrant fouls already this year. I've been hit with a clothesline and no suspensions come of that. And I get two games for this?"

After the game, Bryant was unapologetic. He had been gashed over his left eye in the third quarter when Miller pushed him in the face with his hand; the cut required three stitches.

"Any player that was going to come down the lane at that point in time, I was going to let him know that he just can't walk through there," Bryant said. "I think we as a team have to do a better job of establishing that. And me, as a leader of the ballclub, I've got to take the initiative to do that—and hopefully, everybody will see that.

"This being our home court, people come here and think it's Hollywood and all sorts of stuff, so they think they'll come down (the lane) and look pretty and shoot jump shots and dunk the ball and finger-roll the ball and do all sorts of cute stuff. And we've got to stop that."

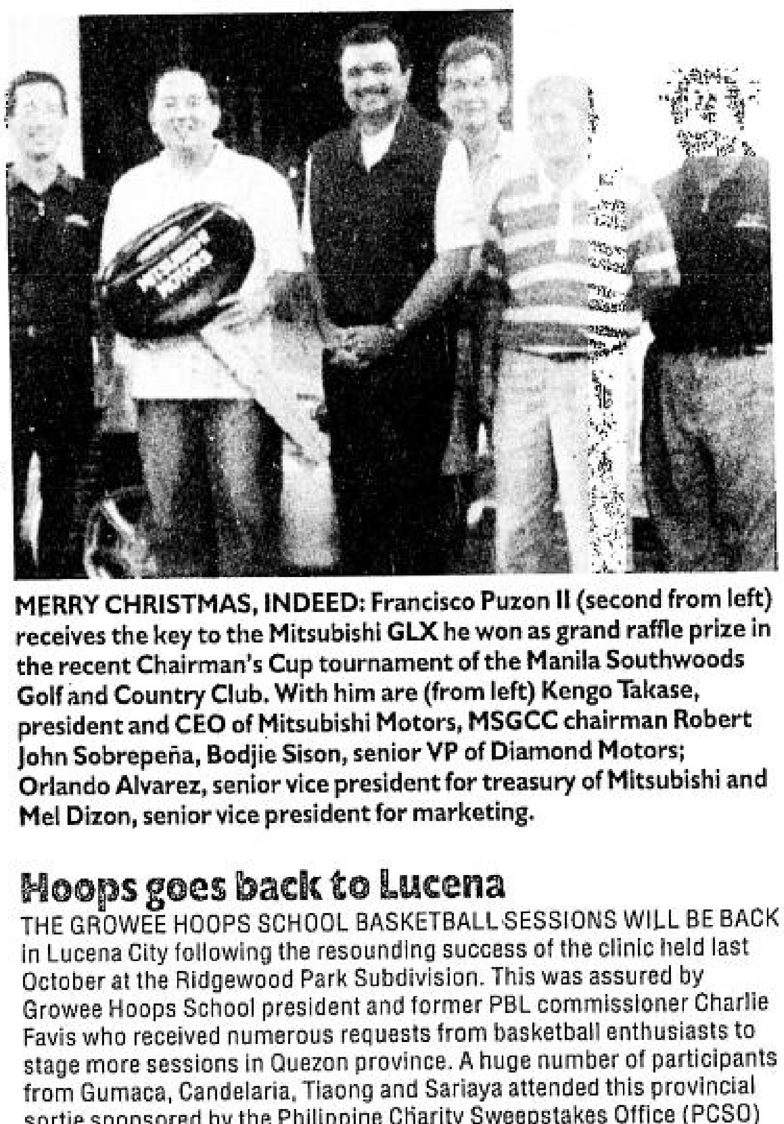
Bryant said his postgame comments were "no different than what everybody else says."

"Somebody comes down the lane, you've got to hit him," he said Friday. "You can't let them come down the lane and just finger roll and get easy baskets. Nothing to hurt anybody like that. That's just basic NBA basketball."

Bryant also said he didn't believe the elbow from Miller was intentional.

"You look at the replay, my face was nowhere near him," Bryant said. "My face was nowhere near his arm.

"I wish I could go back in time and take that foul back knowing what I know now, getting two games for it. But no way in my mind did I think it was going to be a suspension for something like that. No way." *AP*



MERRY CHRISTMAS, INDEED: Francisco Puzon II (second from left) receives the key to the Mitsubishi GLX he won as grand raffle prize in the recent Chairman's Cup tournament of the Manila Southwoods Golf and Country Club. With him are (from left) Kengo Takase, president and CEO of Mitsubishi Motors, MSGCC chairman Robert John Sobrepeña, Bodjie Sison, senior VP of Diamond Motors; Orlando Alvarez, senior vice president for treasury of Mitsubishi and Mel Dizon, senior vice president for marketing.

Hoops goes back to Lucena

THE GROWEE HOOPS SCHOOL BASKETBALL SESSIONS WILL BE BACK in Lucena City following the resounding success of the clinic held last October at the Ridgewood Park Subdivision. This was assured by Growee Hoops School president and former PBL commissioner Charlie Favis who received numerous requests from basketball enthusiasts to stage more sessions in Quezon province. A huge number of participants from Gumaca, Candelaria, Tiaong and Sariaya attended this provincial sortie sponsored by the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO) despite the short notice of the sessions in Lucena. Favis has tentatively set the return of Hoops basketball clinic in Lucena sometime in April. For inquiries on the Lucena sessions, please call 687-4364, 687-2025 or 688-0167.

Hingis starts comeback vs world No. 63

HINGIS AP

GOLD COAST, AUSTRALIA—MARTINA Hingis' return to competitive tennis will be against 63rd-ranked Maria Vento-Kabchi of Venezuela.

Hingis, who retired from the WTA Tour in 2002 because of ankle, heel and foot injuries, drew Vento-Kabchi for her first-round match at the Australian women's hardcourt championships at Royal Pines. The match will be played Sunday or Monday.

The 25-year-old Swiss player, a former world No. 1, also plans to play next week at the Sydney International and at the Australian Open in Melbourne beginning Jan. 16.

Hingis received wild cards for both the Gold Coast and Sydney tournaments and organizers at the Australian Open have also indicated they will grant her a wild card.

Three of Hingis' five Grand Slam singles victories were in Australia—1997, 1998 and 1999—and she made the final in Melbourne for three straight years from 2000 to 2002. Hingis also won Wimbledon and the US Open in 1997 and was a finalist at the French Open the same year.

"Playing in this country brings back very fond memories for Martina and that can't be treated lightly," tournament director Liz Smylie said Saturday.

Smylie said Hingis was hitting the ball "fantastic" in practice.

"When you're a wild card and not seeded, you're really at the mercy of the gods," said Smylie. "Martina is perfectly aware that the road back may not go perfectly smoothly but it's a bit of a different mind-set for her." *AP*

Peace to the New Year

SPECTATOR

Al S. Mendoza

TODAY BEING THE FIRST DAY OF THE New Year, we also celebrate "World Day of Peace."

Here's a glass to usher in 2006!

Peace to those I might have hurt the past year, including athletes and sports officials who might still be smarting from jabs and uppercuts thrown their way. I seek forgiveness from the bottom of my heart.

I know I have hurt one or two, or even more. I am sorry and I apologize.

Not to pontificate but always, there should be no ifs and buts if you are sorry or else, you are not sorry at all, you are not sincere in asking for forgiveness, you are not genuine in apologizing for your misdeed.

To those who think they might have hurt me, never worry one teeny-weeny bit. If I can dish it out, I can take punches, too.

Christmas last Dec. 25 was about the Child, the birth of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Today is about the Mother, the blessed Virgin Mary—she with the eternal symbol of peace, patience and love.

Lucky are those whose mothers are still around. Whether you are young or old, there's no feeling so complete and fulfilling than when you are in the company of your mother.

I'm sure all our athletes the year past, whether superstars or not, drew strength most especially from their mothers, whether living or dead. There's no force next to God's that is more powerful than our mother's.

I, myself, talk to my departed mother every now and then, whether I'm down or not. And that holds true to my departed father, too. They may have left us, yes, but their presence will never perish or God doesn't make mangoes in Christmastime for our *balikbayans* like Tito & Baby Laurel of Staten Island, New York, and Daniel & Dina Causon of Ottawa, Canada.

The truest, purest and most lasting symbol of love has been and will always be the image of Mother and Child.

There's nothing more powerful in conveying eternal peace and protection than the replica of the Child in the arms of his Mother. I had just one of that myself this Christmas, a fairly large framed picture as a gift showing Malaya carrying her Mayasoh; it now occupies a special spot on the sala table reserved for family mementos.

A while back, the Mother and Child scene had been reenacted once more —albeit, in a tragic manner.

The story goes that 3-year-old Angel survived five days of winter chill beside the dead body of her mother. This was in Phoenix, Arizona, in early February of 2003.

Listen to Fr. Erasio Flores, SVD: "Inside the badly wrecked car driven by her mother, Angel Emery, three years of age, had maintained herself for five days with crackers and, in a freezing cold, she kept herself warm with a cloth with which the dead body of her mother was covered."

Surely, our mothers will never, ever leave us.

And, if only to stress the obvious once more, the quiet power behind our smashing success in the 23rd SEA Games is the mother of every Filipino athlete that saw action in the biennial affair that, until 2005, we hadn't won since we joined it in 1977.

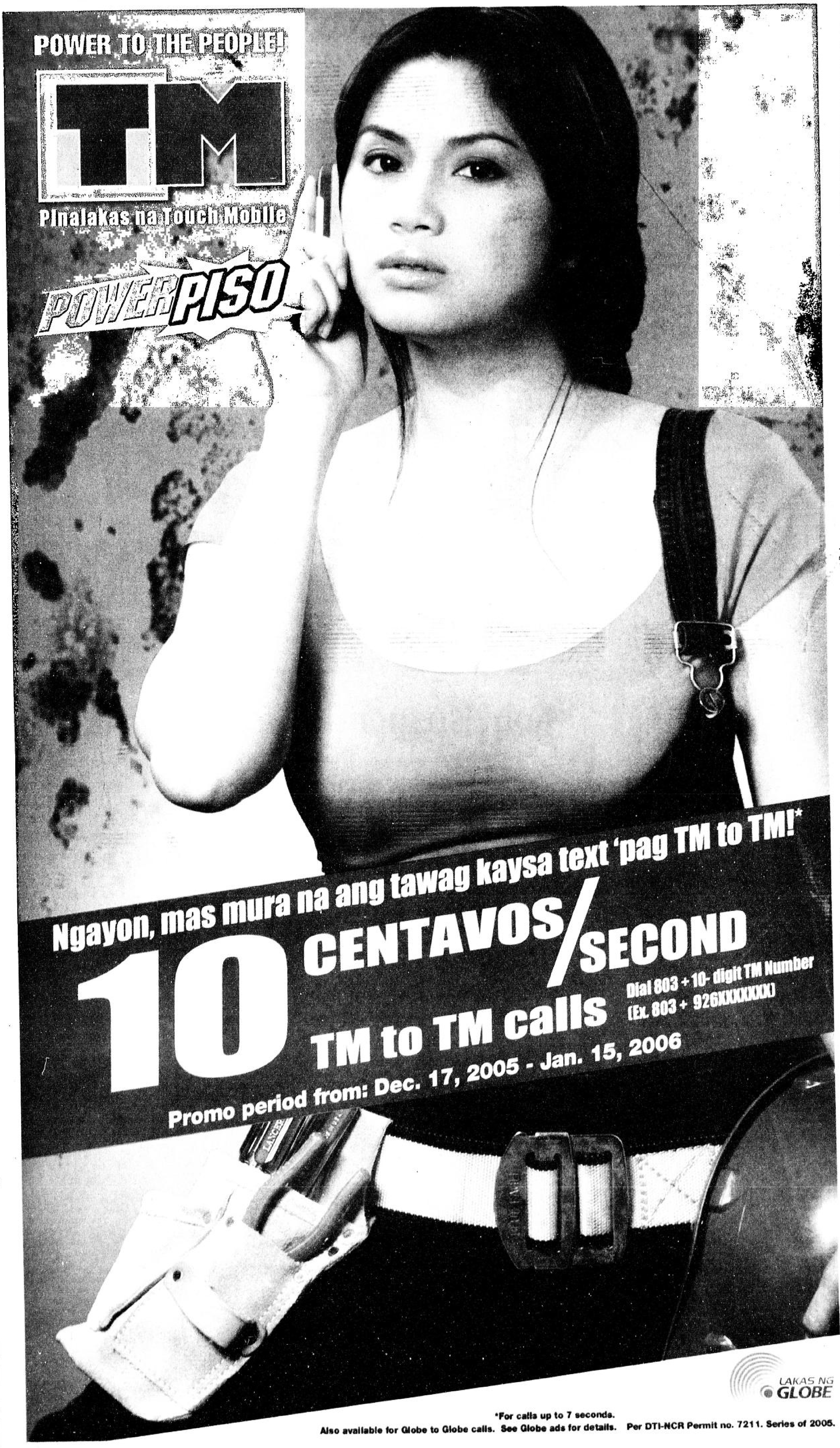
Happy New Year!

* * *

FASTBREAK. Tia Soling Mendoza Sison, my Grade 3 teacher in Mangatarem, Pangasinan, has died. She was 94. Childless (her late, lamented hubby was Tio Guding, the division superintendent), Tia Soling raised Kuya Napi, Atchie Minerva and Atchie Lily to be great people greatly respected and admired in my hometown. Her remains will be interred on Jan. 7, Saturday, at the town's Catholic cemetery. She was my teacher who counseled: "Always remember those who have helped you."

* * *

Comments to menju@pldtdsl.net



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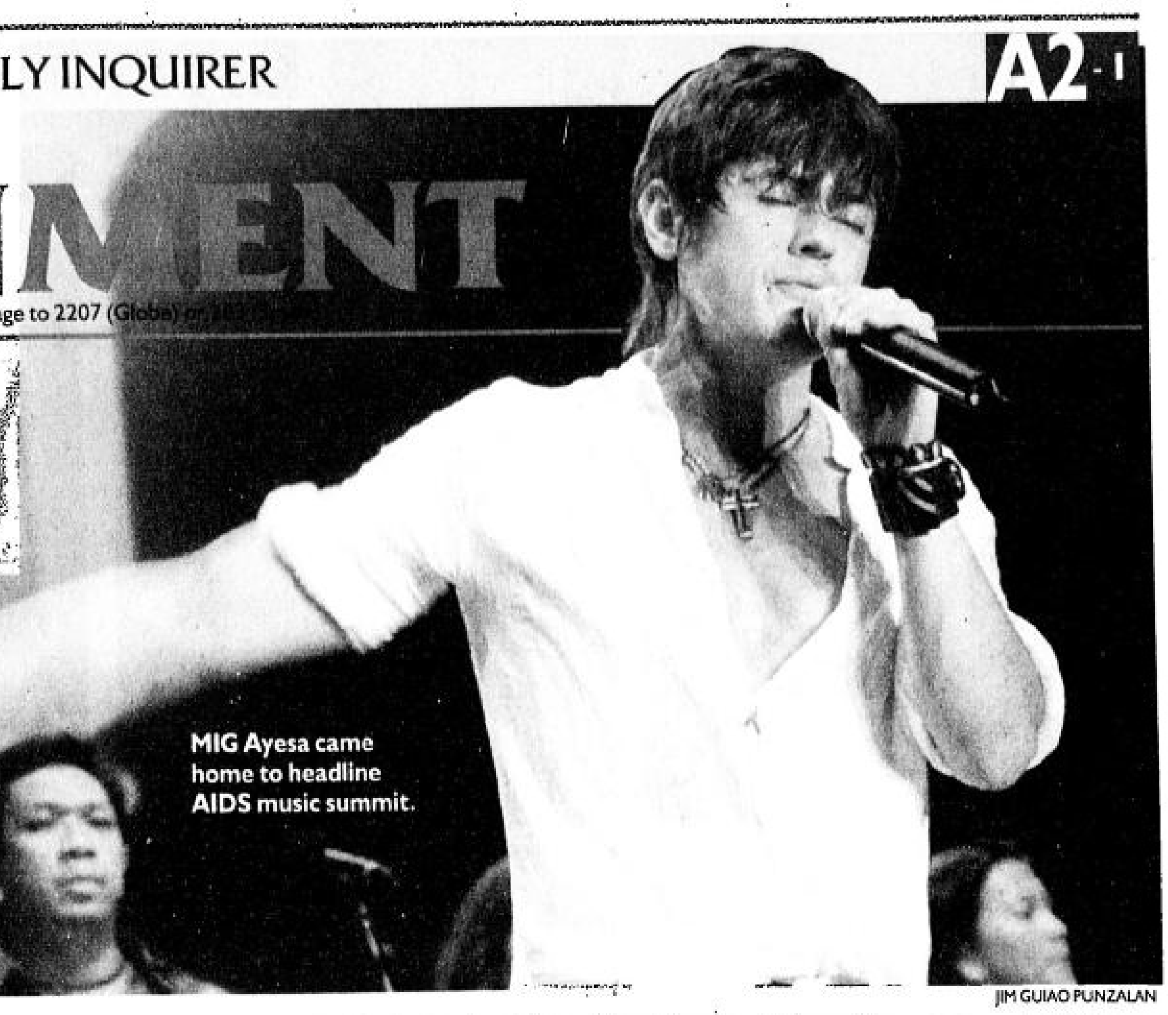


MIG Ayesa came home to headline AIDS music summit.

JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN

Snapshots of 2005

Awards and altercations, scandals and successes

By The INQUIRER Entertainment Staff

January

- To celebrate her 39th birthday, singer-actress Sharon Cuneta grants the wish of 39 lucky letter-senders on her "Dear Sharon: Wish Upon a Mega" TV special—including one for a *carabao* (water buffalo)!
- Veteran broadcast journalist Orlando "Orly" Punzalan, father of dramatic actress Princess, dies of cardiac arrest at the National Kidney Institute. He was 70.
- Rosanna Roces' 16-year-old daughter Grace Adriano gives birth to a baby boy. The father is Jolo Revilla, also 16, son of Sen. Bong Revilla and Lani Mercado.

February

- The Professional Artist Managers Inc. (Pami) seeks dialogue with ABS-CBN and GMA 7 executives on the topic of scandal TV—or the spate of sex-video exposés and other controversies reported on showbiz-oriented talk shows.
- Actors Richard Gutierrez and Brian Revilla are involved in a scuffle outside a bar at The Fort in Taguig City. A radio disc jockey and a fashion consultant threatened to file legal charges against the actors.
- Sony Music Philippines and BMG Pilipinas announce the merger between the Japanese Sony and German Bertelsmann Music Group, the second and fifth biggest record companies worldwide, respectively. Rudy Tee is new managing director.
- Aga Muhlach denies rumors that he made pregnant former bold starlet Olivia Ortiz in the '80s and that his family had ordered her to abort the baby.
- Jose Gabriel Bautista is christened, with 15 pairs of celebrity-godparents.
- TV host Christine Bersola gives birth to a baby girl, Antonio Sofia. Father is broadcaster Julius Babao.
- Lucy Torres denies widespread rumors that she was caught shoplifting in a big department store.

March

- Are the country's top post-production firms in trouble? Turns out Roadrunner is doing fine, but LVN Laboratory is up for sale.
- GMA 7 launches TV version of Mars Ravelo's "Darna."
- The officials of the Philippine Movie Press Club (PMPC) forms a committee to investigate the alleged vote-buying at this year's Star Awards for Movies.

DAWN Zulueta had a baby. RAFFY LERMA

KRISTINE Hermosa wed Diet

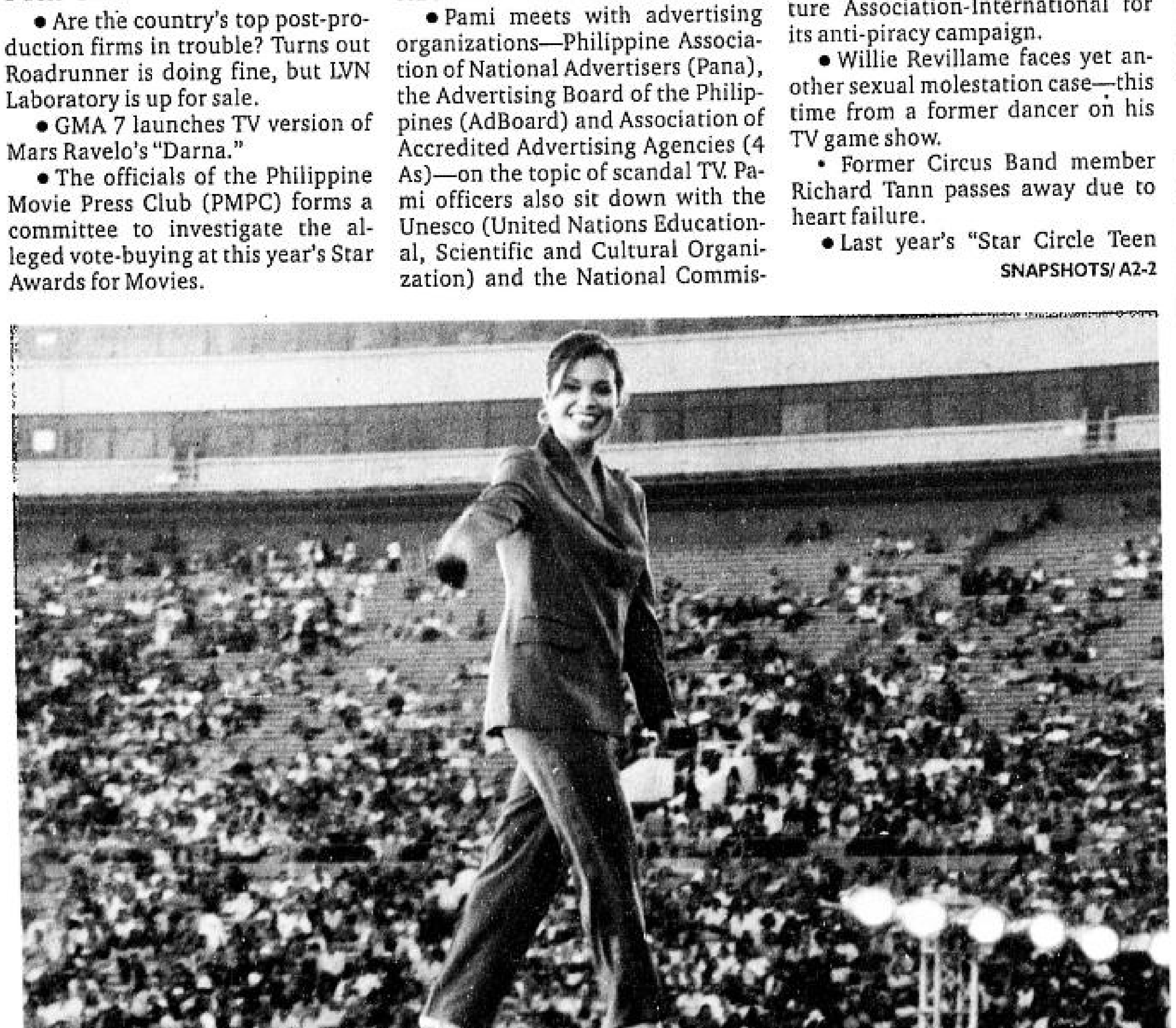
April

- Actress-singer Nora Aunor is detained at the Los Angeles Airport for alleged possession of illegal drugs.
- Boy Abunda declares war against GMA 7 on the issue of Piolo Pascual's alleged sex video.
- LVN is officially put up for sale.
- Movie and TV artists, led by filmmaker Jose Javier Reyes, sign a petition against "unethical" showbiz talk shows on television.
- Pami meets with advertising organizations—Philippine Association of National Advertisers (Pana), the Advertising Board of the Philippines (AdBoard) and Association of Accredited Advertising Agencies (4 As)—on the topic of scandal TV. Pami officers also sit down with the Unesco (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) and the National Commission of the Philippines.
- Filipino-American filmmaker Mark V. Reyes' "Last Full Show" wins Best Short Film in the Turin Gay and Lesbian Film Festival on April 27.
- Comedian and TV host Willie Revillame is charged with acts of lasciviousness by tabloid columnist Salvacion Asis.
- Broadcasting network GMA 7 launches its "Grand Kapuso Fans Day" in key cities such as Cebu, Davao, Dagupan and Baguio in its bid to grab from ABS-CBN the No. 1 spot in the ratings game.
- GMA 7 launches the hit fantaserye "Encantadia." The network claims to spend P3 million to turn a 1,900 sq. m. warehouse into a surreal paradise.
- Ryan Agoncillo declares he's ready to wed Judy Ann Santos anytime, anywhere, if she says yes.

May

- The country's top two networks go on the road—taking their promo campaigns all over the archipelago. The ABS-CBN and GMA 7 rivalry reaches fever pitch in Cebu, where their shows are mounted at the same time one weekend in early May.
- Advertisers Coke, Jollibee and Greenwich pull out of two showbiz talk shows, "The Buzz" and "S-Files."
- Charo Santos-Concio, ABS-CBN executive vice president for Entertainment, bats for TV self-regulation.
- Cuneta kicks off her US concert tour with shows in Florida, Chicago, Atlantic City, Reno, San Diego and Los Angeles.
- Mark Meily's second film, "La Visa Loca," gets an A from the Cinema Evaluation Board (CEB). His debut, "Crying Ladies," also got an A from the CEB in 2003.
- Judy Ann Santos gets in trouble with the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) for unpaid taxes amounting to P6.7 million. (Other celebrities slapped with tax evasion raps are singer Regine Velasquez, actor Richard Gomez and manager Douglas Quijano.)
- The Optical Media Board (OMB) is lauded by the Motion Picture Association-International for its anti-piracy campaign.
- Willie Revillame faces yet another sexual molestation case—this time from a former dancer on his TV game show.
- Former Circus Band member Richard Tann passes away due to heart failure.
- Last year's "Star Circle Teen

SNAPSHOTS/ A2-2



LEA Salonga at ABS-CBN's "ASAP '05" concert in Pasadena, in July. In November, she made her Carnegie Hall debut.

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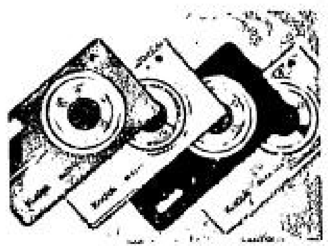

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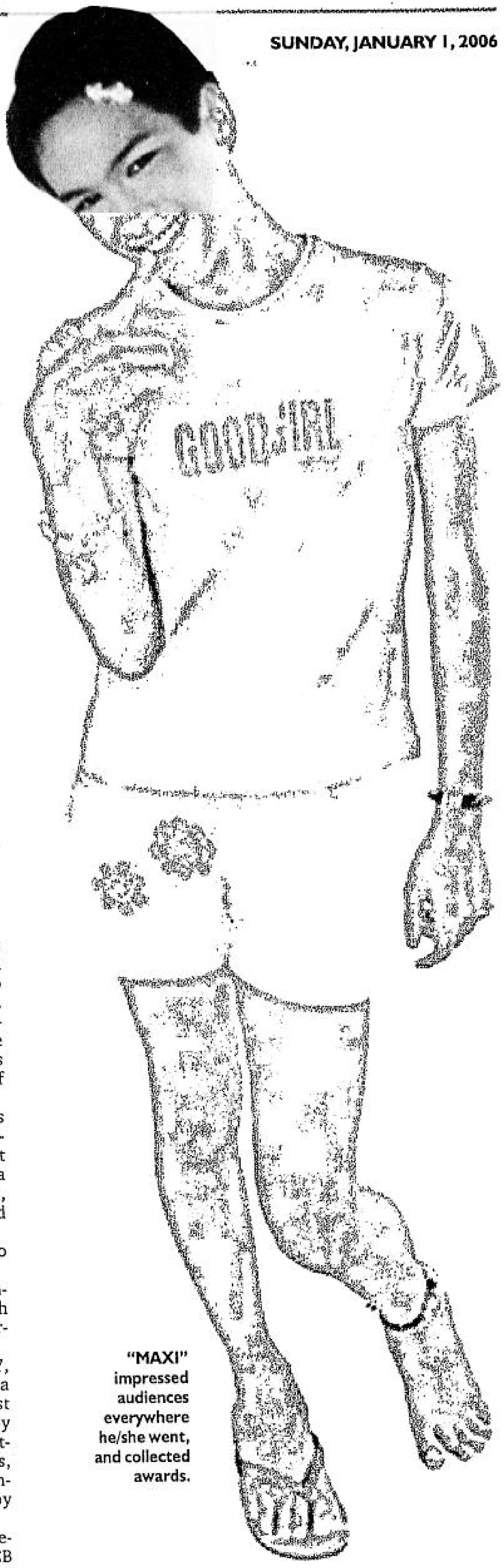
DINA Bonnevie sued for estafa.

CLAUDINE Barretto takes on magazine editor

ROSANNA Roces became a *lola*.



"MAXI" impressed audiences everywhere he/she went, and collected awards.

Snapshots of 2005

From page A2-1

Quest" winner, Hero Angeles, admits he had a falling out with love-team partner Sandara Park and his home studio ABS-CBN.

- GMA 7 suspends Richard Gomez for using vulgar words in the Sunday talk show "S-Files." The move was prompted by a complaint from the Movie and Television Review and Classification Board (MTRCB).
- Character actor Romy Diaz, diagnosed with tongue cancer in 2004, is declared brain dead.
- President Macapagal-Arroyo appoints Vic del Rosario as presidential consultant for entertainment.

June

- GMA 7 employs international action choreographer Wong Wai Fai to choreograph fight scenes in "Sugo."
- Actress Dina Bonnevie and boyfriend Timothy Calvin Riggenberg face estafa raps for their business venture, iFreedom Communication Corp.
- Two independent productions—Cesar Montano's "Panaghoy sa Suba" and Lav Diaz's "Ebolusyon ng Isang Pamilyang Pilipino—share the Best Picture prize at this year's Urian Awards.
- After an almost four-decade ban, Behn Cervantes' "Sakada," a provocative film on agrarian unrest, makes its TV debut on ABC 5 on June 25.
- TV sweethearts Kristine Hermosa and Diether Ocampo never publicly admitted they had gotten married but on June 17 she files a petition with the Makati Prosecutor's Office to have the marriage annulled.
- ABS-CBN offers 200 employees big early retirement packages.

July

- The first Cinemalaya Philippine Independent Film Festival opens at the Cultural Center of the Philippines. Doy del Mundo's "Pepot Artista" wins Best Picture and Auraeus Solito's "Ang Pagdadalaga ni Maximo Oliveros" cinches Special Jury Prize.
- LVN Pictures signs deal with group, led by Jimenez and Gloria, for its film laboratory facilities. The new post-production company is dubbed Opticolors.
- The Cinema One Digital Film Festival runs for three days in SM Megamall.
- GMA 7's "Extra Challenge" is slapped with a one-day suspension by the MTRCB after a Muslim group complained about the show's "Pasaway sa Dubai" series. The Kapuso network reprimands Rufa Mae Quinto for uttering vulgar words on the noontime show "SOP"
- Pinoy TV, GMA 7's international channel, is launched in the United States.
- Filipina Hollywood actress Giovannie Pico visits the country. Pico plays Ludlow, Asian medical student in "ER," the longest-running television series in the US.
- ABS-CBN announces that it is reviewing the contacts of its stars amid reports that the network has asked its biggest talents to accept lower fees. Maricel Soriano, lead star of the soap opera "Vietnam Rose," waives the annual 20 percent increase stipulated in her contract to show her support for the network.
- The Network Wars go abroad—ABS-CBN and GMA 7 stage road shows in California. ABS-CBN's events in Pasadena and San Francisco turn out to be the biggest show of Pinoy talents ever staged in the West Coast.
- Claudine Barretto files libel case vs Yes! Magazine editor in chief Jo-Ann Maglipon. Maglipon and daughter file counter suits. The parties are reportedly closer to a settlement after a day of mediation.

August

- Brillante "Dante" Mendoza's "Masahista" wins the Golden Leopard in the video competition of the 58th Locarno International Film Festival in Switzerland. The Filipino digital film, starring newcomer Coco Martin and veterans Jaclyn Jose and Alan Paule, ties with "Les États Nordiques," directed by Denis Côté of Canada.
- Singers Jed Madela and Rizza Navales top the World Championships of Performing Arts (WCOPA), dubbed the Talent Olympics, held in Hollywood. They bag a total of 11 gold medals, one silver medal, three Champion of the World plaques and the Grand Champion title for Madela.
- The Mowelfund's Pambansang Museo ng Pelikula formally opens.
- The Moonrise Film Festival of environmental movies runs at Gateway, with Butch Nolasco's "Legacy: Philippine World Heritage Sites" winning the top prize.
- With 26 cameras trained at them 24/7, 12 strangers agree to stay in a house for a hundred days, baring their innermost selves on the ABS-CBN reality show "Pinoy Big Brother." A housemate will be eliminated one by one until one winner emerges, romping away with millions in prizes. Imported from the Netherlands, the Pinoy version is launched via three TV specials.
- ABS-CBN's "Pinoy Big Brother" receives a "stern warning" from the MTRCB for airing "objectionable dialogue" and footage of female contestants in "skimpy" outfits.

September

- Solito's "Ang Pagdadalaga ni Maximo Oliveros" wins the Golden Zenith award in the First Films category of the 29th Montreal World Film Festival.
- Digital filmmakers Paolo Villaluna and Ellen Ramos' "Ilusyon" gets an A rating from the CEB.
- All-woman lineup of QTV 11, Bro. Eddie Villanueva's Zoe as repackaged by GMA 7, is bared.
- Filipino filmmaker Khavn's "Lata at Tsinelas" is awarded a Special Mention prize at the Morbegno Film Festival in Italy.

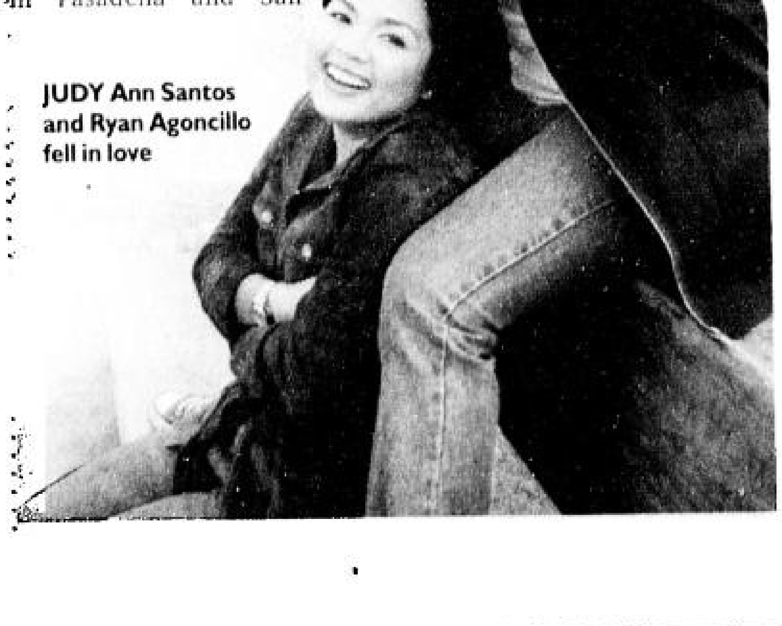
SNAPSHOTS/ A2-6

REGINE faced tax evasion charges.

ALMA was detained in Japan airport.

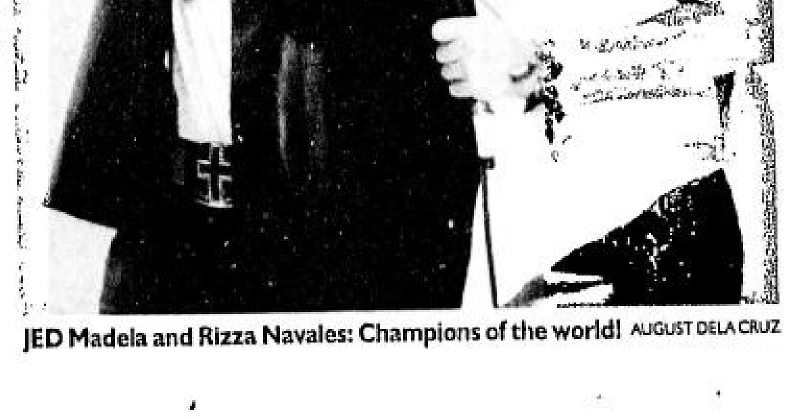
WILLIE Revillame faced two sexual harassment charges

VIC del Rosario was appointed presidential consultant



JUDY Ann Santos and Ryan Agoncillo fell in love

CESAR Montano hit the jackpot places with "Panaghoy sa Suba."



JED Madela and Rizza Navales: Champions of the world! AUGUST DELA CRUZ

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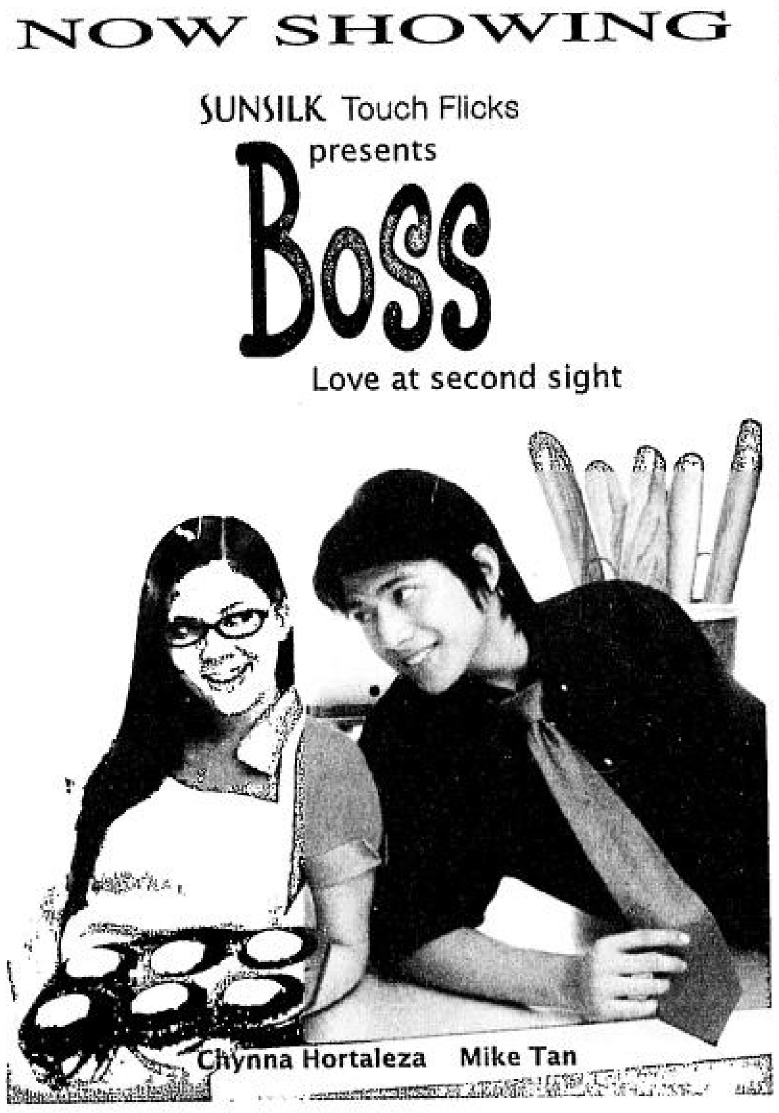
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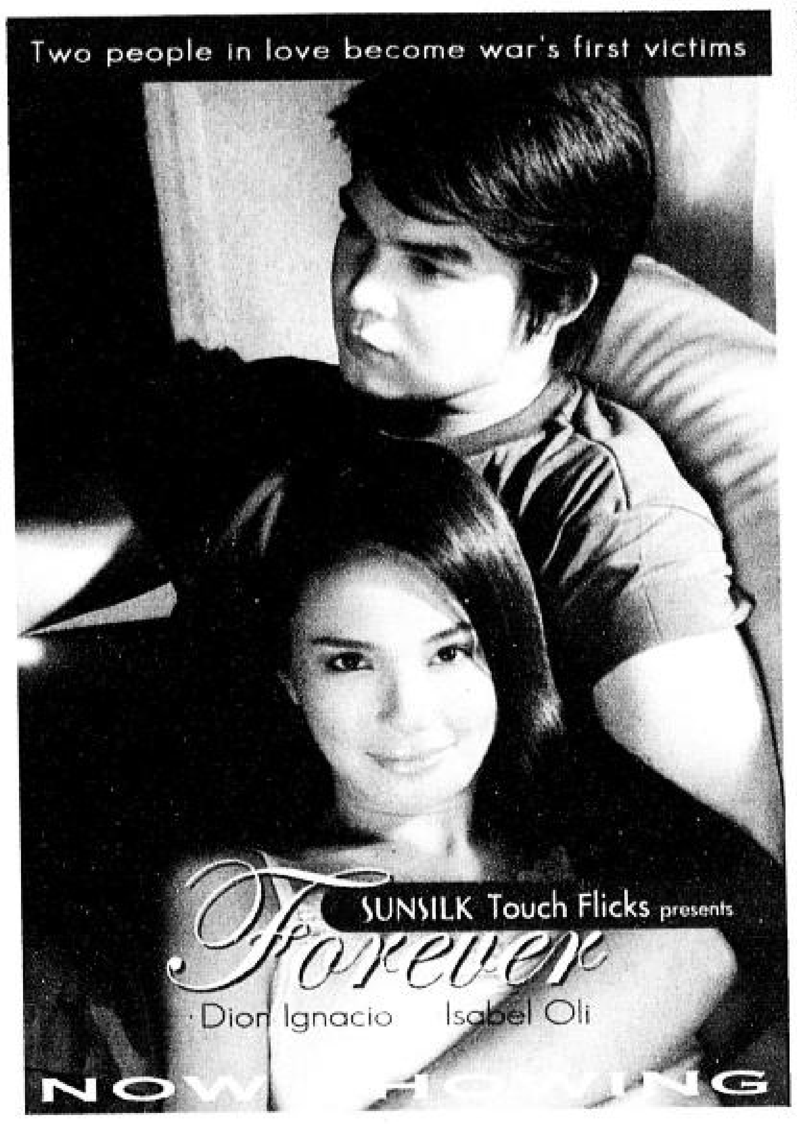
Two people in love become war's first victims
SUNSILK Touch Flicks presents
Forever
Dion Ignacio
Isabel Oli
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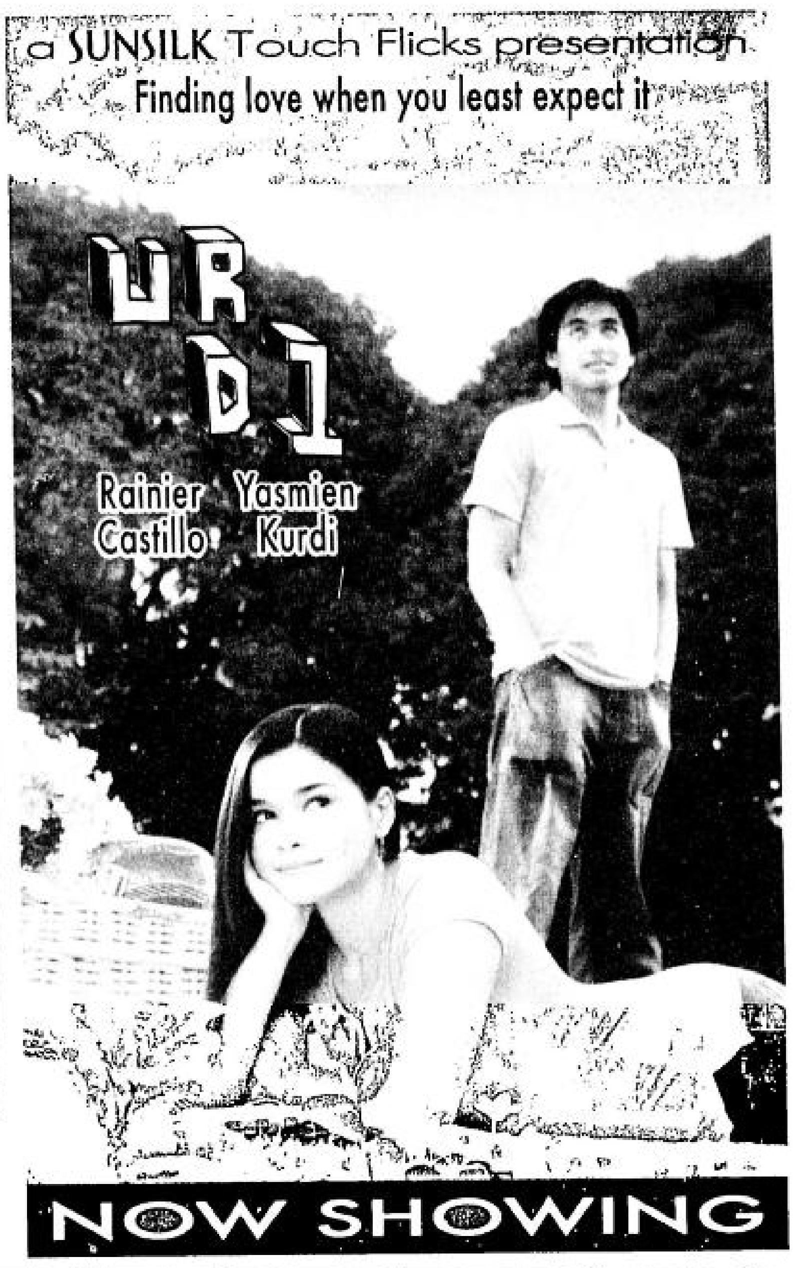
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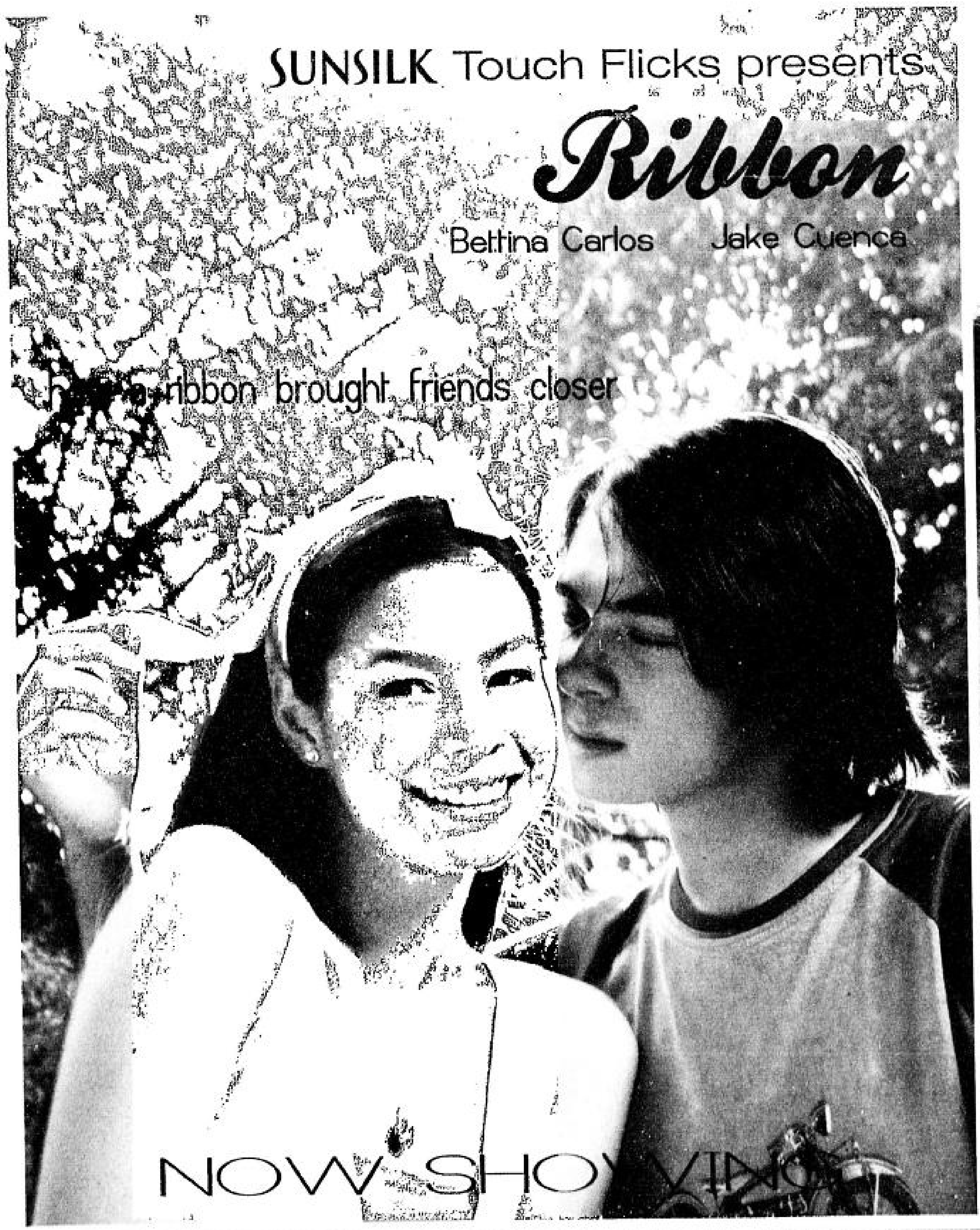
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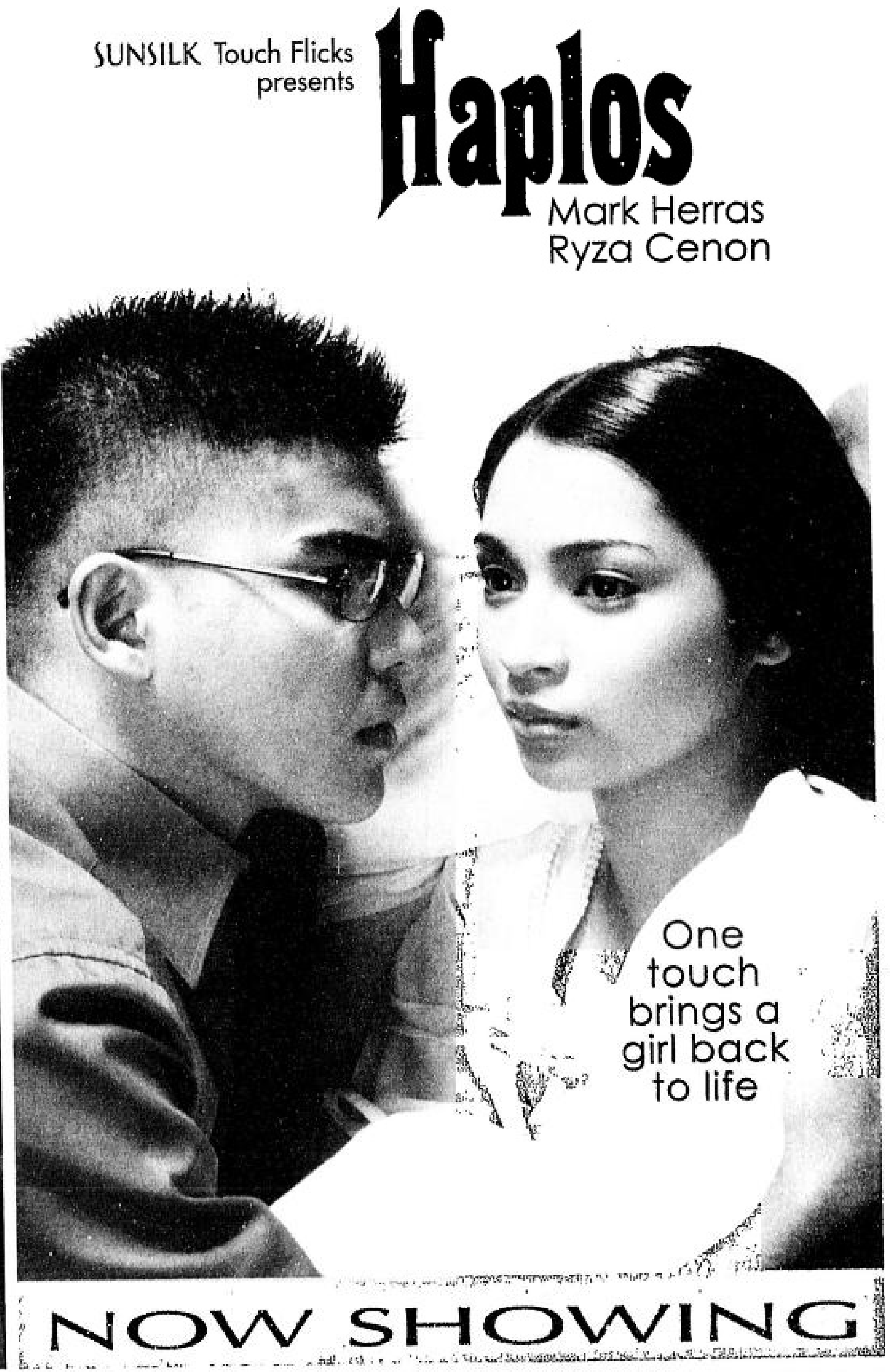
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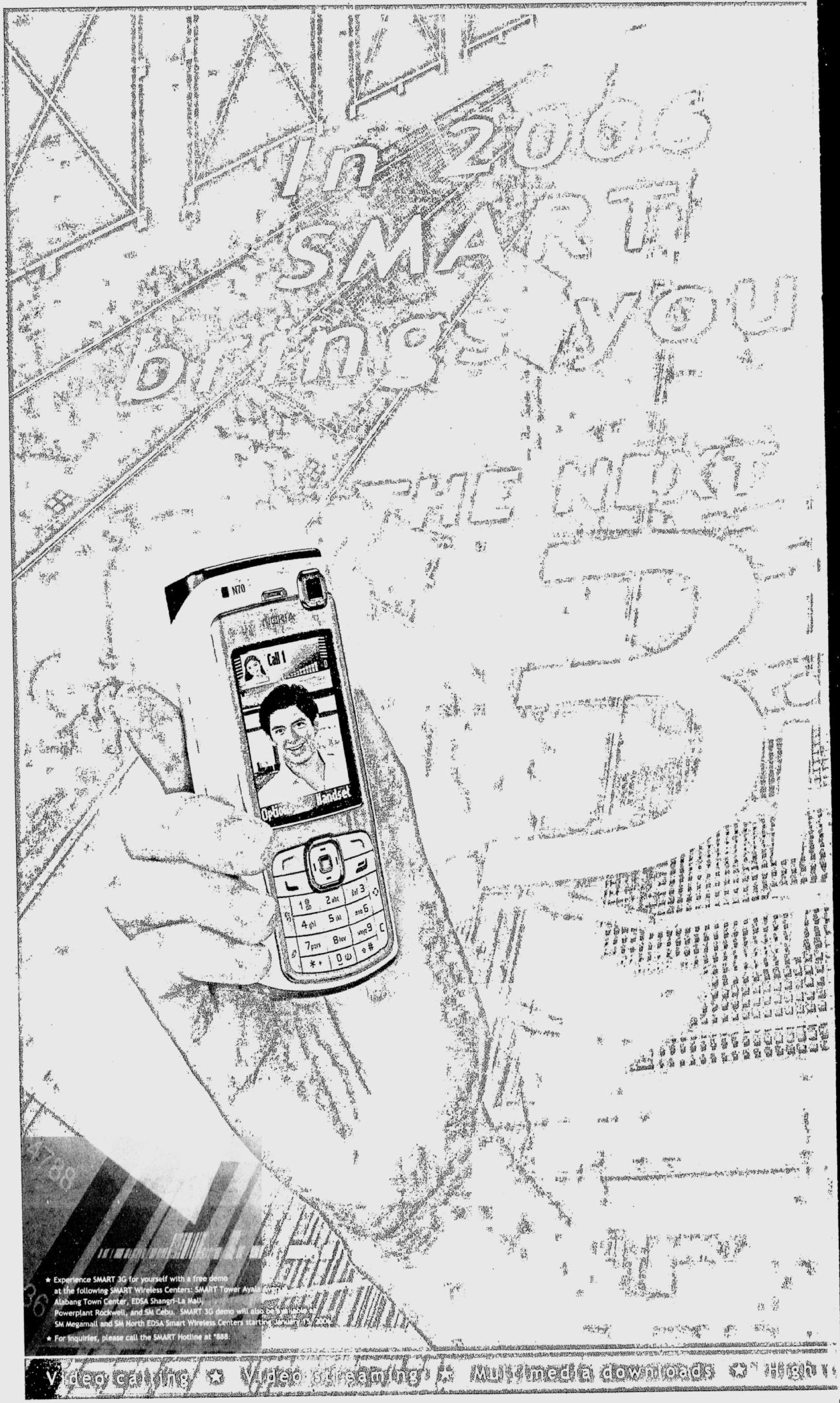

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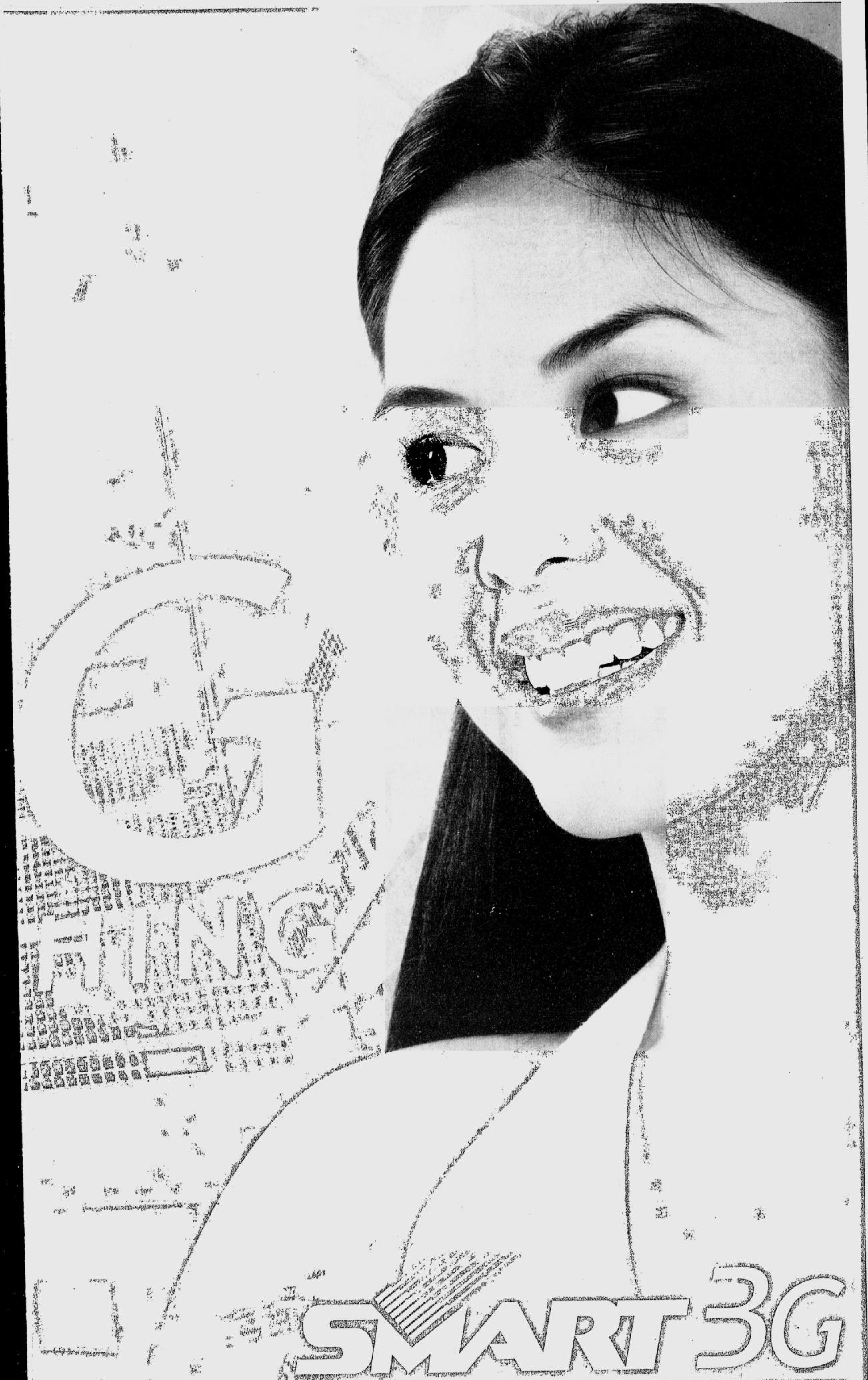
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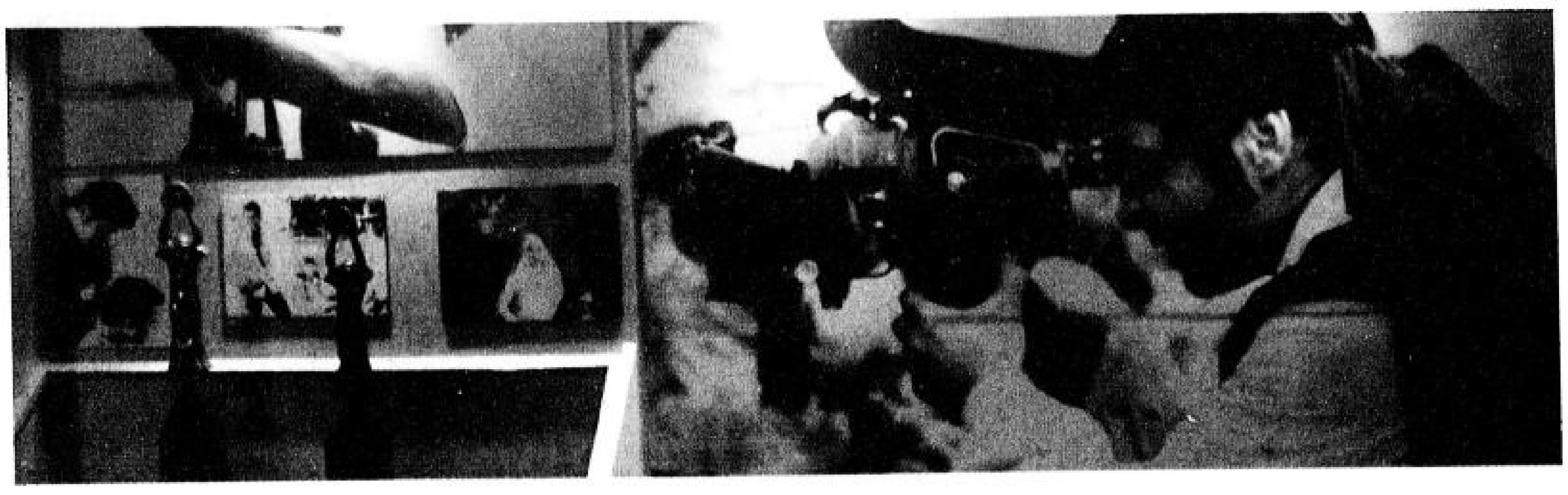

ON THE EVE of his first death anniversary, Action King Fernando Poe Jr. was honored by his peers with the inauguration of the FPJ Hall in the Mowelfund Museum. RODEL ROTONI

JANNO Gibbs headed for Splitsville.

Snapshots of 2005

From page A2-2

- Lani Mercado admits her son, Brian Revilla, is going out with sexy actress Maui Taylor.
- Bing Loyzaga announces that she has parted ways with husband Janno Gibbs. Father-in-law Ronaldo Valdez says he wished Bing were more patient.
- ABS-CBN's "Pinoy Big Brother" is slapped with a one-day suspension by the MTRCB.

October

- The 7th Cinemanila International Film Festival moves from Makati and opens in the city of Manila.
- Filmmaker Auraeus Solito complains that his Cinemanila entry "Tuli" was cut and reedited by its producer, Viva Films, after it failed to merit favorable ratings from the CEB and the MTRCB. The film company apologizes to the director, whose work later wins Best Digital Film in Cinemanila's local digital films competition.
- Tony-winning actress-singer Lea Salonga happily announces that she is pregnant. Husband Robert Chien and grandmother Ligaya Salonga are just as jubilant, of course.
- Consultant Robby Tarroza and action star Rudy Fernandez figure in an altercation at the Viva offices. According to Tarroza, he is being blamed by Fernandez for his and ex-wife Alma Moreno's detention at the Narita International Airport in Tokyo, Japan.
- The Philippines has no entry in the Best Foreign Language film category of this year's Oscars. Leo Martinez, Film Academy of the Philippines (FAP) director general, later vows that the academy (whose job it is to field a Philippine entry) will do better next time.
- Filipino composer Jesse Lucas wins "Best Musical Score" for Yam

SNAPSHOTS/ A2-8

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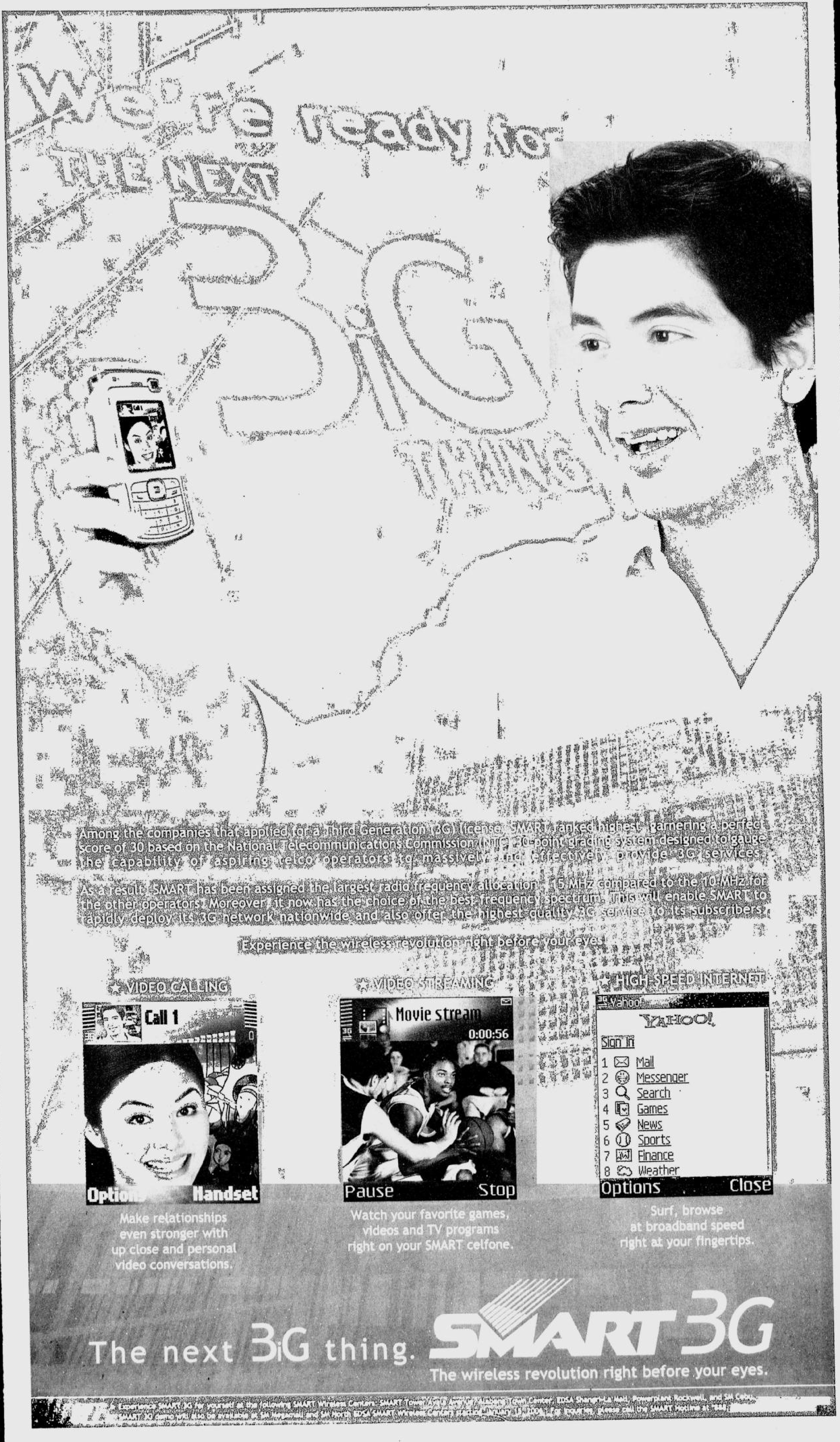
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Snapshots of 2005

From page A2-6

Laranas' "Sigaw" at the LA Screamfest.

- Broadcast journalist Karen Davila accepts Child Rights Award for the ABS-CBN show, "The Correspondents" from the Asian Broadcasting Union, Cable Satellite Broadcasting Association of Asia and Unicef. The Filipino documentary show bests 50 entries from 12 countries in the Asia-Pacific region.
- Juancho Gutierrez, Gloria Romero's leading man in reel and real life, passes away due to multiple organ failure after a five-year battle with diabetes.
- After a seven-year wait, actress Dawn Zulueta gives birth to her son by Anton Lagdameo. Zulueta earlier suffered a miscarriage.
- Actress and Quezon City councilor Aiko Melendez figures in an altercation with businesswoman Happy Ongpauco and friends at Nuovo restaurant in Greenbelt 2, Makati. Both parties have filed cases against each other.

November

- Rico Maria Ilarde's "Sa Ilalim ng Cogon" wins Best Picture at the Rojo Sangre horror film festival held in Buenos Aires, Argentina.
- There's confusion at the launch of the Metro Manila Film Festival (MMFF). Executive Committee member Manny Nuqui points out that Regal's official entry is "Nasaan Ka Nang Kailangan Kita?" and not "Blue Moon."
- The LVN Archives finds new homes for its 102 movie titles, the state-of-the-art ABS-CBN Archives; and for its museum, the UP Film Institute.
- Mario Cornejo and Coreen Jimenez's "Big Time," Best Screenplay and Best Sound winner at the Cinemalaya film fest, is rated A by the CEB.
- Theater giant SM opens seven cinemas with digital projectors. It later adds three more digital theaters, bringing the total to 10.
- "INXS Rock Star" finalist Mig Ayesa, who's Filipino-Australian, comes home to headline MTV's AIDS music summit; and "American Idol" finalist Constantine Maroulis visits Manila.
- Filmmaker Jose Javier Reyes puts the Metro Manila Film Festival (MMFF) and Regal Films to task, for the "Nasaan Ka"-"Blue Moon" controversy. "Blue Moon" is later fielded as Regal's official entry.
- Solito's "Ang Pagdadalaga ni Maximo Oliveros" gets an A from the CEB. It also makes the grade as the first Philippine entry to the World Cinema competition of the Sundance Independent Film Festival and wins Best Film at the Asian Festival of First Films held in Singapore.

ANGEL Locsin, new Darna

NENE Tamayo, new millionaire

- Filmmaker Laurice Guillen speaks for the first time on her departure as head of the Film Development Council of the Philippines (FDCP), describing the way she learned of the news as "humiliating."
- Two months after the awarding ceremony, Cinemanila finalists and winners complain that they have yet to receive cash prizes. Manila City Administrator Dino Nable promises the checks are forthcoming.
- Cesar Montano and his "Panaghoy sa Suba" win the Grand Prix Special du Jury award from the International Festival of Independent Film in Brussels, Belgium.
- Government-owned radio station dwBR balks at plan to convert it into an all-OPM (Original Pilipino Music) station.
- GMA Network launches QTV 11.
- Angel Locsin bids goodbye as Darna.
- Supported by members of the women's group Gabriela, Plinky Recto files a domestic abuse case against her former partner.
- Another controversial separation rocks show biz. Actress Sheila Ysrael and former Laguna vice governor Dan Fernandez hurl charges of infidelity and abuse against each other, as they pursue their annulment and child custody cases.

December

- Cuneta wraps up her concert tour with shows in Guam, Hawaii and Dubai.
- On the eve of the first death anniversary of Action King Fernando Poe Jr., the FPJ Hall is inaugurated at the Pambansang Museo ng Pelikula in the Mowelfund compound in Cubao, Quezon City.
- Actress Sunshine Cruz gives birth to third daughter, Angela Francesca. Everything is perfect, says the mom, except for the fact that husband Cesar Montano is in the US.
- Romblon lass Jennivev "Nene" Tamayo emerges from "Kuya"'s house after 100 days as the ultimate winner on the reality show "Pinoy Big Brother," cinching P6 million in cash and prizes, including a house and lot and a Nissan Frontier. Coming soon: "PBB" celebrity edition and a new season.
- GMA 7 wins the Terrestrial Channel of the Year award at the Asian Television Awards in Singapore. Actors Michael V and Nonie Buencamino, TV programs "I-Witness" and "Eat... Bulaga!" bring home awards, too.
- Metro Manila Film Festival opens.

A very lively concert scene

NORAH Jones

- Big foreign acts delighted Filipino fans: Norah Jones in March; the Cascades in September; Michael Bublé in October; Beach Boys also in October; and The Stylistics in December.
- In March, Ramon "RJ" Jacinto mounted "RJ Guitar Fest," a tribute to rock as guitar music.
- The Juan de la Cruz band held a reunion concert in June.
- MTV's Staying Alive Music Summit draws thousands to the Open Field at The Fort on Dec. 1.

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VANGIE LABALAN TIN ARNALDO PINKY AMADOR JANNA VICTORIA RJ ROSALES JANUARY ISAAC ALAN PAULE JIM PEBANCO
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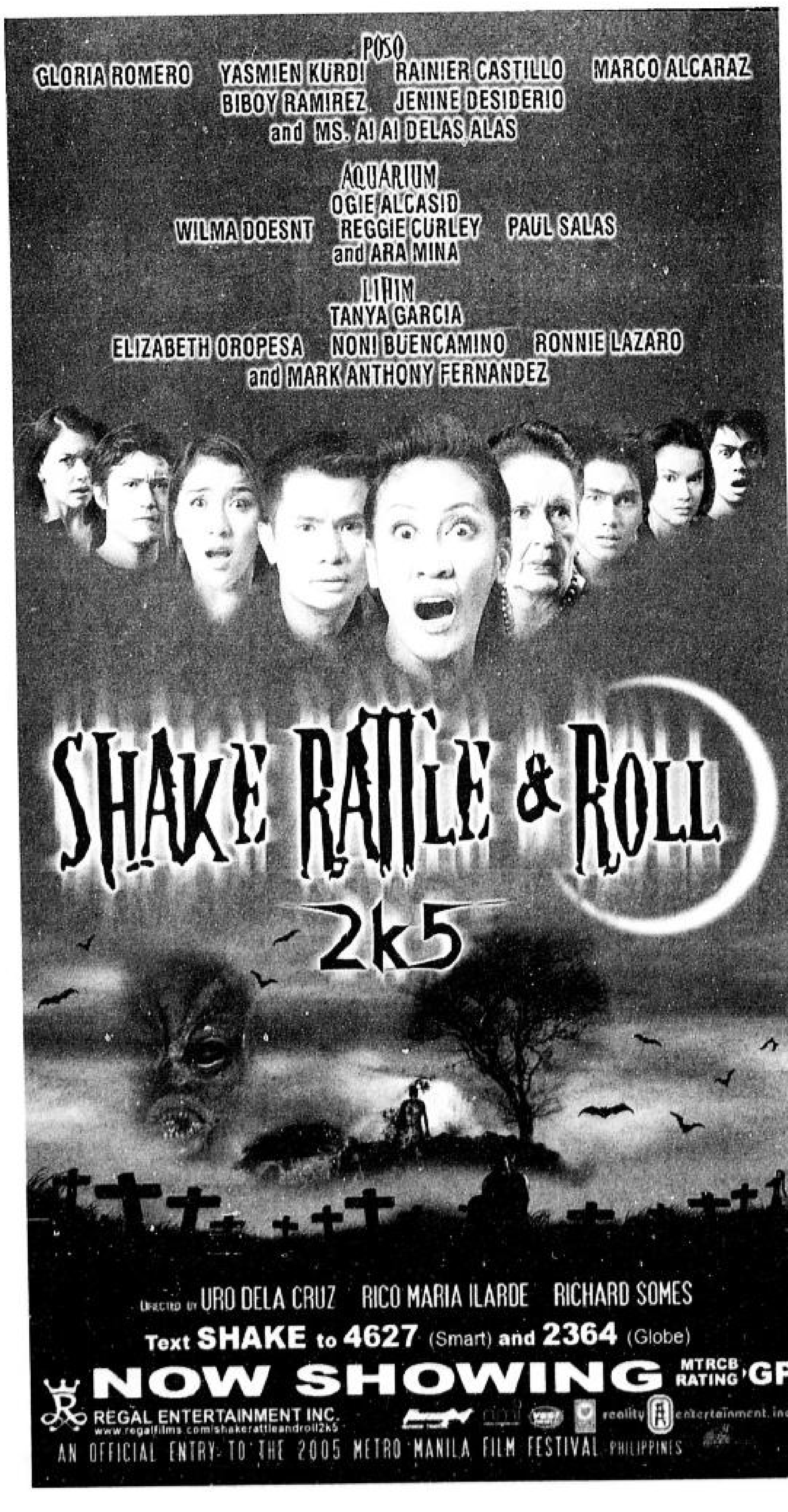
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AQUARIUM
OGIE ALCASID
WILMA DOESNT REGGIE CURLEY PAUL SALAS
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YEHEY

The chronicles of Tilda Swinton —one very interesting witch

NO MAKEUP contributes to her distinctive look

ONLY IN HOLLYWOOD

Ruben V. Nepales

LOS ANGELES—A BLISSFUL NEW YEAR to all!

Let us look back one more time at one very interesting person we interviewed last year. I limited my list of 2005's most fascinating interviewees to 30 in my Dec. 28 and 30 columns but if I could add one more, that would have to be Tilda Swinton.

Tilda, who plays the White Witch in the current blockbuster "The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe," is as intriguing in person as some of her bio entries thus far:

- Grew up in a castle in Scotland that her family has owned since the ninth century.
- Went to an English boarding school with Princess Diana, who was then known as Lady Diana Spencer.
- Devoted two years of her young life helping in children's schools in Africa.
- Stayed in a glass case for eight hours a day for her performance art piece at a London art gallery.
- Portrayed a sex-changing character (man to woman) who lives for four centuries(!) in the film "Orlando."
- Was a member of the Communist Party of Great Britain.

With such a remarkable life, Tilda does not disappoint in person. When we first met her for this interview in London, she was striking—imagine this tall woman in an intricate long coat. The whiteness of her coat made her flawless skin stand out. Sans makeup, she was beautiful in an unconventional way. The severe face, especially her unadorned eyes, conveyed honesty. She spoke forcefully—with directness, precision and clarity.

Later in New York, Tilda dropped by to greet us as we were having lunch at the Mandarin Oriental Hotel. Wearing a mannish white shirt, she managed to steal the thunder from the awe-inspiring sight of Central Park on a clear autumn day. Having appeared mostly in small indie films, Tilda was new to this traveling press circuit scene; she was struck by the fact that only a few weeks earlier, she saw us in London. "They should make a documentary of your lives," she told us.

Tilda is married to artist and playwright John Byrne with whom she has two children, the twins Xavier and Honor, who are seven. With her solid reputation as an actress (she won the Best Actress award in the 1991 Venice Film Festival for "Edward II"), she has served as a member of the jury at the Cannes and Berlin Film Festivals. In "The Deep End," she earned the critics' raves as the mother of a gay son who goes to all lengths to protect her child after his older, abusive lover is found dead.

Needless to say, Tilda is very effective and literally, chilling, as the White Witch. Even the kids whom she terrorizes in the movie (directed by "Shrek" director Andrew Adamson) love her.

In New York, Skandar Keynes (Edmund) said of her icy tormentor: "Tilda was a cool lady but at first she was told not to talk to us and not to socialize with us. I was trying to work out what was wrong with her. She was always being sort of given looks by Andrew not to talk to me and I think it helped in our first scene."

William Moseley, the oldest of the four sibling protagonists in the movie (the other two are the lovable, radiant Georgie Henley and Anna Popplewell), concurred: "Yes, Tilda was an amazing actress. What struck me about Tilda in our battle scenes was that I thought I was fighting a girl and I didn't really want to hit her too hard. But when Tilda wielded that sword at me for the first time, it shattered against my shield (laughing). I didn't think she wanted to be patronized. We had this mutual understanding. When she steps onto the set, there's something awe-inspiring about her and grabs your energy and attention. I think that's what makes the action great."

"Narnia" has drawn some controversy after Disney decided to pattern its marketing efforts after those of the church-based campaign that made Mel Gibson's "The Passion of the Christ" such a huge hit. A pivotal "Narnia" character, the lion Aslan, is seen by some as symbolic of Christ tortured in place of a sinner.

Below are excerpts from our press con with Tilda.

"I WOULD have been burnt as a witch because ... I have a third nipple."

Can you talk about the efforts to market this movie through the Christian faith groups?

I'm not in the marketing department so I don't know. I understand that big films get marketed through different ways. They get marketed through burger joints and all sorts of places. We were part of the making of an adaptation of C.S. Lewis' book. We're not a religious group ourselves—we're filmmakers. C.S. Lewis was a very well known writer of Christian tract. He was a very devout Christian himself but this is not a religious film. People will project into it, as with all works of art, whatever they want and that's entirely their right.

You don't believe there are biblical allegories in it?

I think there are biblical allegories wherever you want to see them. There's a biblical allegory going on right now in this meeting. What you want to see, you see. But personally I was brought up to believe that it's extremely bad manners to talk publicly about your faith or to ask anybody else their faith.

From Angel Gabriel in "Constantine" to the evil White Witch is quite a switch for you.

I was shooting "Constantine" when I agreed to make this film. It appealed to my sense of humor that I started the year with the Angel Gabriel and end with the epitome of evil.

What have you learned about alleged witches through the centuries?

Men are traditionally frightened—women have been burnt through the ages for being witches. I didn't know I was going to tell you this but I would have been burnt as a witch because I am in the great community of people who have a third nipple. Back then, any piece of exotica will get you burned as a witch.

How is your witch in this movie different?

There was an early decision made for the witch not to be dark, which I'm really happy about. I think there's a not very honorable tradition of Hollywood villains, particularly in children's films, to be dark. I don't get it and I think it should stop. I thought that it was much more important that this Second World War villain, which essentially she is, is the ultimate white supremacist and very white.

Talk about pedigree and a remarkable life ... she is really quite intriguing

The thing that really frightens little children is not raging and shouting because they themselves rage and shout all the time. From my experience as a child, and I drew on my own thoughts and remembrances of what it was to be a child, the thing that children find really unfathomable is coldness, a kind of detachment and unpredictability. The ability of someone to switch from being emotional to being emotionless—that's what children find really frightening.

Why do you think are you often described in articles as otherworldly?

It's because I don't wear makeup. That's all it is (laughing). I look otherworldly because people don't expect people to sit at a table like this not wearing any makeup. I don't feel otherworldly myself. I feel quite human (laughing).

This movie is director Andrew Adamson's first live-action movie after two animated films. Can you talk about working with him?

I was asked what it was like to work with someone who was used to work with animation and who is used to getting it absolutely right because in animation, you can draw it again if you don't get it right. In fact, it was refreshing because for a start, you knew that if he liked something, he really meant it. He is used to dealing with a kind of perfection so he'll ask me for precisely what he wants.

How absurd did it get on the set?

It's always absurd when you're surrounded by grown men wearing green tights, with big sort of orange bobbles stuck all over them and you just go, "Hi Sean," or whoever, and you don't laugh. The day you don't laugh is absurd because you get used to it. Or when you're having a perfectly sensible conversation about child care with someone with a minotaur's head on.

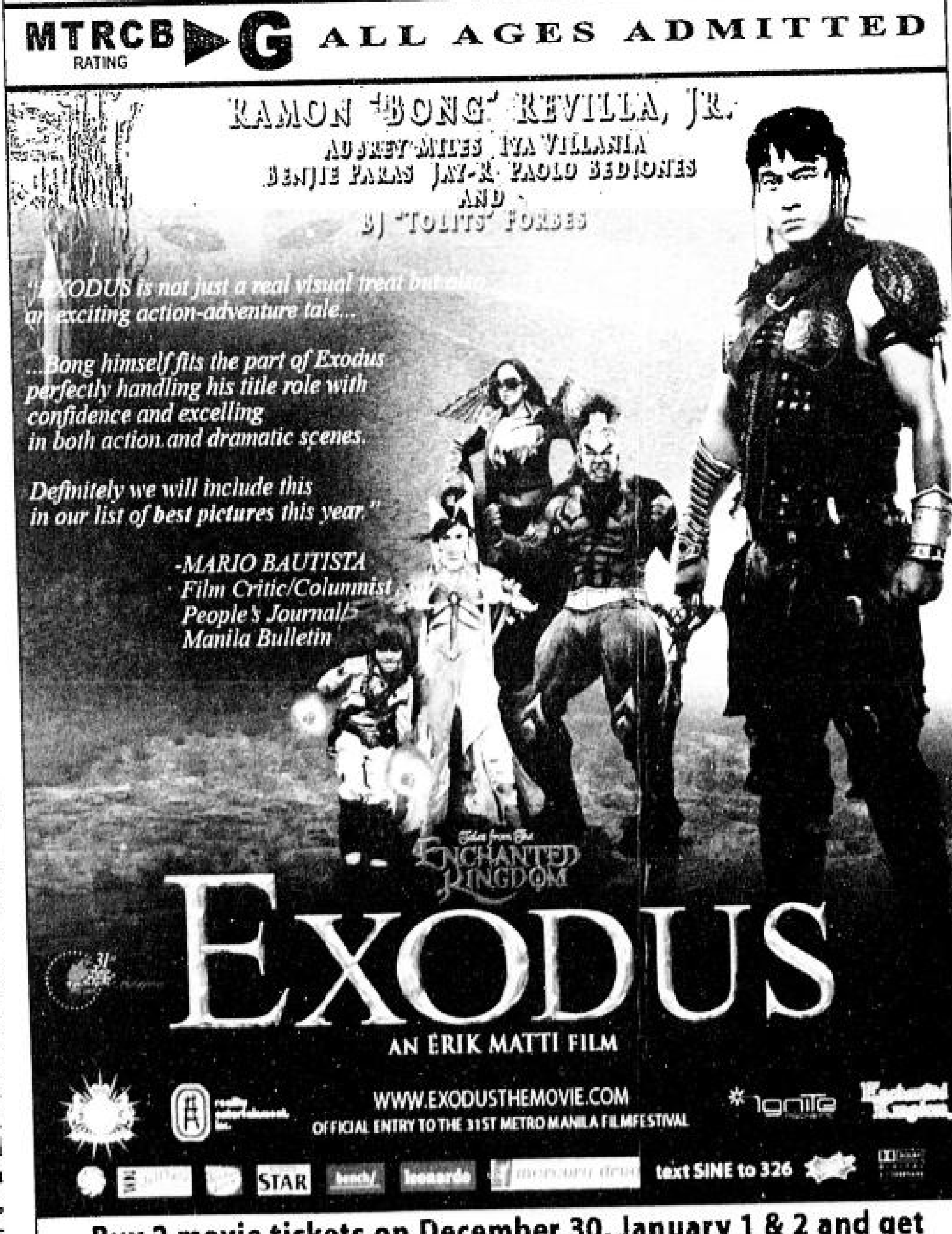
What is it like having twins, a boy and a girl? How similar or different are they?

I always think it's a very funny joke that heaven played on me when I spent the first part of my working life making a movie about the principle that there may be no difference between men and women. I made this film called "Orlando" in which I change genders over centuries. In the theater, I played Mozart and a woman pretending to be her dead husband. And then I got sent boy and girl twins! It was a real lesson that yes, there is a big, big difference. The boy, I think at six months, would take a bar of soap and go broom, broom, broom!

Are you still a member of the Communist Party?

I am not a member of the Communist Party in Great Britain because there isn't one anymore. I was a member of the Communist Party when I left university. The Communist Party changed its name, its affiliation and became The Democratic Left. I've never left that group of people. They're very good company and I am still in touch with them.

E-mail the columnist at rnepales_5585@yahoo.com



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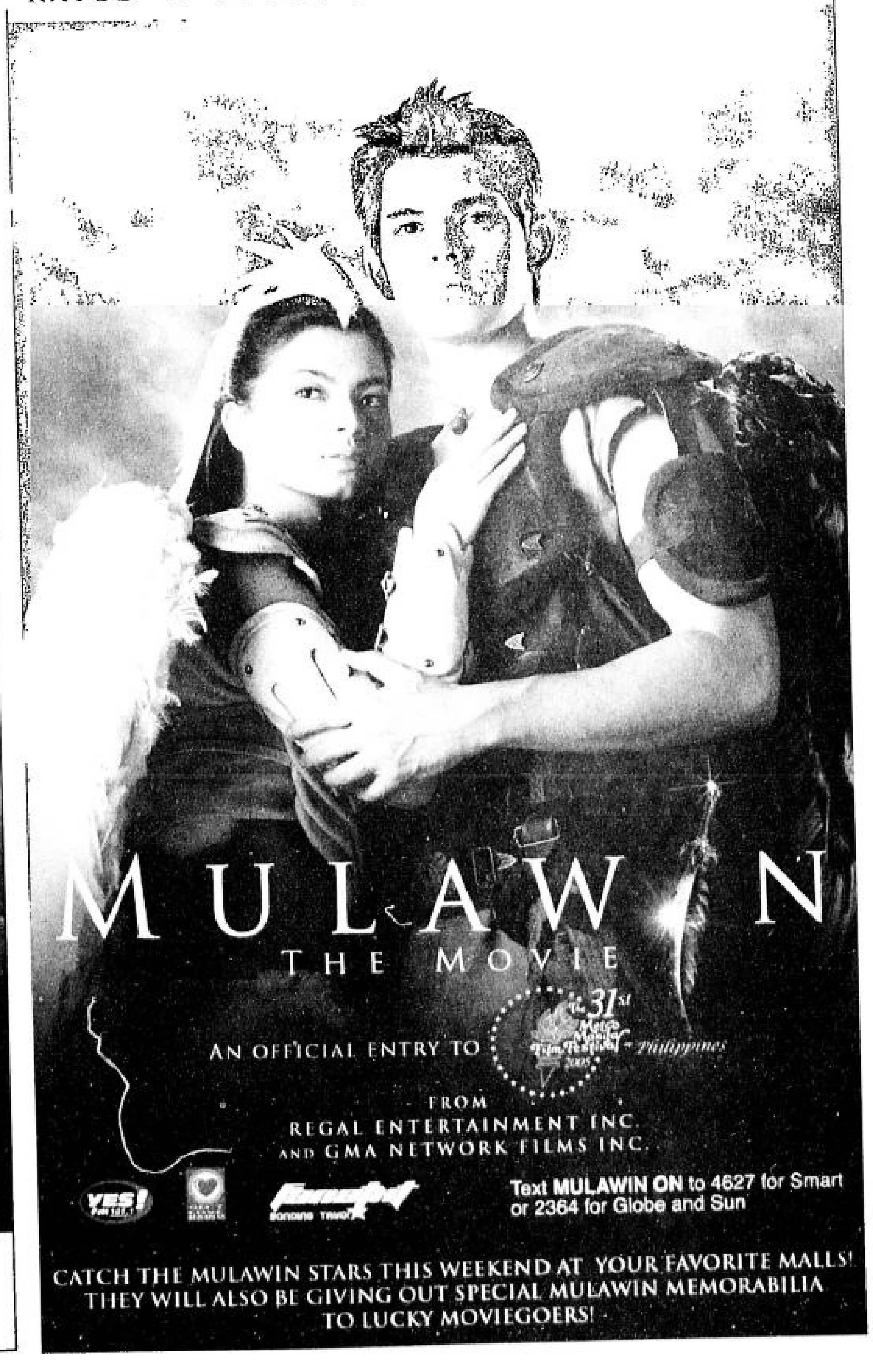

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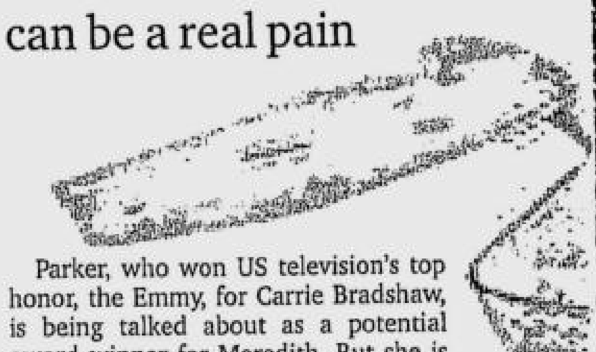
Yes, Mr. Big, there's life after Carrie Bradshaw

Sarah Jessica Parker can be a real pain



LOS ANGELES—SARAH JESSICA PARKER, who played the lovable Carrie Bradshaw on "Sex and the City," can be a real pain—at least in the movies.

Two years since the hit TV show that explored the lives of New York City women aired its last original episode, Parker is back with a new film, "The Family Stone," about a solid clan whose tight bonds come undone when the eldest son brings home a girlfriend whom nobody likes.

The girl, Meredith Morton, is played by Parker, and she is far removed from the 40-year-old actress—and by extension Carrie Bradshaw—known for a warm heart, bright smile and fashion sense. But that distance, Parker's understanding of it and her transformation into mean Meredith has award watchers buzzing.

"(Carrie) loved examining people and relationships. She loved this idea of human contact and looking and observing, and Meredith is completely the opposite. She would like not to be touched. She would like not to be hugged," said Parker.

Meredith is a cold-hearted woman, albeit a funny one. Gone are Parker's curly blond locks, in their place a bun tightly pulled back. Parker's colorful outfits give way to Meredith's dark suits, slacks and sweaters.

Perfectly imperfect

"Family Stone" producer Michael London, who was behind award winner "Sideways" last year, said because Parker is so well-liked, she made the perfect choice to portray vilified Meredith. Audiences may not like her, but for the movie to work, they cannot hate her, either.

"The movie lives or dies on how you feel about Meredith because she says and does things that are unsympathetic," London said. "We took advantage of the perception audiences had of Sarah and of the Carrie Bradshaw thing."

Meredith, audiences learn, is not the only imperfect person in the world. For all their perfection, the Stones have their faults, too, and when Meredith comes into their home, cracks soon appear in the Stones' veneer.

Anybody who has ever been to a boyfriend or girlfriend's house for dinner or experienced meeting the new in-laws for the first time can identify with Meredith.

"It's about family and love and loss and disappointments, acceptance and tolerance and ultimately what it means to be a grown-up person," said Parker.

The Ohio native knows a lot about big families. She has seven siblings—three from her mother's first marriage and four from the second.

Parker said she is very close to her brothers and sisters and that, at family gatherings or holidays, when one brings home a new friend to meet the family, the gossip begins to flow.

"When the person leaves the room, we all look at each other like, 'Well, this can't last very long,' or 'Please God, don't let this last very long,'" she laughed.

"But on the road to being grown-up people, we have learned that you don't get very far trying to drive a wedge into a relationship," she added.

Parker has been married to actor Matthew Broderick for eight years, and they have a 3-year-old son with whom she spends her non-working days. Parker said she can't remember walking into a situation like Meredith's.

Then, upon reflection she adds, "I was probably in the restroom when they were talking about me."

Flattering

Chicago Sun-Times critic Richard Roeper said "The Family Stone" should not be overlooked.

Parker, who won US television's top honor, the Emmy, for Carrie Bradshaw, is being talked about as a potential award winner for Meredith. But she is characteristically humble when discussing this.

"It's very enjoyable, to some degree, to get caught up in it because, frankly, it's very flattering," she said. "I have a very philosophical view of it. We made this movie and had this amazing experience. Now people will actually tell us how we did." *Bob Tourtellotte, Reuters*

AS MERED

"THAT experience is not part of me."

Cherie Gil glad to be alive after tsunami

By Nini Valera

A YEAR AFTER SHE FACED DEATH IN the form of a tsunami, Cherie Gil has found a deep calm.

"Every day is a blessing for me," said Cherie, who was in a resort in Phuket, Thailand, with her husband Rony Rogoff and their two children when the killer wave hit several sea coast towns in South Asia.

"It's funny," she told INQUIRER Entertainment. "I only think about it when someone asks what it was like."

Cherie recalled that he and Rony were in their hotel room waiting for the kids to wake up so they could all head for the beach. Suddenly, the wave was upon the whole resort.

Had the children been up, they would certainly have been out on the beach at the precise moment that the tsunami struck.

"It wasn't so bad for us," Cherie said. "The hotel was at the far end of the cove. I didn't see the wave coming. I didn't see people drowning. But it was chaotic, and I was very scared for my kids."

They were eventually evacuated to higher ground. A few days later, Filipinos heard Cherie's voice on national TV recounting her tale.

Control freak

"It's now part of my life," said Cherie, referring to the incident. "So I have to be grateful for it. I tend to forget that I was in the middle of a tsunami. Then I am jolted, and I realize that it did happen."

She admitted that she used to be a control freak. She has realized that some things in life just can't be controlled. "Now, I take life as it comes."

A few days before she left for the annual vacation with her family, this time in Australia, Cherie said, laughing, "What would it be this time? I've been told to stay away from beaches. I might just do that."

Cherie is scheduled to return to Manila in time to work on her new soap, "Gulong ng Palad," where she plays one of the characters whose life mirrors her own little tragedies. "It's good to be acting again in this soap," she said. "It's good to be part of history. It's good to be alive.

Introducing the indie

Digital filmmakers are distributing their works by going straight to the audience

By Bayani San Diego Jr.

FILMMAKER TIKOY AGUILUZ TOLD INQUIRER Entertainment recently that independent digital filmmakers in Indonesia spearheaded an alternative distribution network by tapping non-governmental organizations. "They sold their films to NGOs that took care of everything," he said. "I tried that with my [1997] film 'Rizal sa Dapitan.' I went around the provinces and approached NGOs, like the Red Cross."

That way, Aguiluz recounted, the movie did well outside Metro Manila.

The same non-traditional route is being taken by debuting director Ellen Ongkeko-Marfil whose digital movie, "Mga Pusang Gala," is the first local feature shot on MiniDV that was successfully blown up to 35mm film.

Ongkeko-Marfil's film, produced under her own Erasto Productions, opened in commercial theaters on Aug. 17 with only 11 prints and 18 theaters. It went on to enjoy a three-month provincial run which ended in October.

Not enough

Ongkeko-Marfil admitted, however, that they encountered quite a few "stumbling blocks" along the way, namely, marketing practices and commercial theater rules that stifle the growth of indie films.

"We realized that it wasn't enough to produce, that setting up an indie network was also necessary for the survival of independent films," Ongkeko-Marfil told INQUIRER Entertainment.

Informally, this "alternative distribution network" has been dubbed indiefilmsnet.

ELLEN Ongkeko-Marfil, left, with actors Lauren Novero, Ricky Davao and Irma Adlawan

"These are exciting times," the filmmaker said. "Aside from 'Pusang Gala,' we are also carrying a few short films from the Cinemalaya film fest. The news about SM's 10 new digital theaters was very welcome, but it doesn't diminish the need for an alternative network."

With indiefilmsnet, digital filmmakers are going straight to their target audience: students and the NGO sector.

"For educational purposes, [these movies] could be a take-off point for discussion on indie filmmaking, gay-women-and-gender issues, sociology, and film and theater adaptation," she said.

Last December, "Pusang Gala" and the Cinemalaya short film "Babae" were screened in Baguio, with viewers from both campus and NGO communities.

From Feb. 1 to 4, "Pusang Gala" and four Cinemalaya short films ("Babae," "Kultado," "Mansyon" and "Alimuom") will be shown at SM Iloilo. There will also be a workshop on digital filmmaking.

"Dr. Zoilo Andrada of UP Visayas helped us a lot," Ongkeko-Marfil said.

It is vital to go straight to the audience, she noted, because "these school-based organizations are open to all issues ... and, as future media and film practitioners, they share our goal of increasing the mass base of films with different sensibilities."

The network is eyeing overseas business. "We are targeting Filipino expatriates and are currently negotiating with organizations in Hong Kong and San Francisco," she said. "Interested groups, they can contact us at indiefilmsnet@yahoo.com, call 7229787 or text 0919-8113617."

Juliana on Shine: 'We don't talk ... there's nothing to talk about'

A year after the celebrated tiff, the girl is still in fighting form

JULIANA Palermo

By Bayani San Diego Jr.

THE LAST TIME SHE HAD A METRO Manila Film Festival entry (last year's "Panaghoy sa Suba"), nymphet Juliana Palermo figured in a very public tiff with co-star Cesar Montano's wife, Sunshine Cruz.

"That was over a year ago and people are still asking me about it," Juliana complained to INQUIRER Entertainment. "C'mon that should be long-forgotten."

True enough, the subject of Sunshine was brought up after Juliana was teased about it by a co-worker at the press con of her latest MMFF entry, Gil M. Portes' "Mourning Girls."

Has she patched things up with Sunshine?

"We don't talk, so I don't know," Juliana snapped. "In any case, what is there to talk about? It's a closed book. So many things have happened since then. It doesn't bother me anymore."

She insisted that intrigues hardly ever faze her. "After all that I've been through in this business, I've learned to just smile and nod [when confronted with controversies]. Everyone is entitled to his own opinion so I cannot control what other people may think of me."

What she would rather talk about are her two new films, "Mourning Girls" and "Kaleldo." The second one is "Masahista" director Brillante "Dante" Mendoza's sophomore outing, which will premiere in the first quarter of 2006.

In "Mourning," she is Visayan (like in "Panaghoy"); in "Kaleldo, she's Kapampangan.

The past year allowed her to be handled by directors with varying styles. "*Direk* Gil lets us express ourselves. He's very easy to work with," she said. "*Direk* Dante, on the other hand, is very meticulous. I learn a lot working with different directors."

Another subject she would gladly discuss is being big sister to Doods, a special child.

"He's been with me for over a year now," she said. "I've always wanted to take care of him. I just made sure I could afford it."

A proud moment for Juliana was when her younger brother performed in a school recital. "He played the national anthem and a Christmas song medley on the piano. Basically, I'm his mom, dad, sister and best friend combined."

SUNSHINE Cruz

CHEER FACTOR

DAVID Letterman

Now he can go after her

SANTA FE, NEW MEXICO—A STATE JUDGE HAS lifted a restraining order granted to a woman who accused talk-show host David Letterman of using coded words to show that he wanted to marry her and train her as his co-host.

Judge Daniel Sanchez on Tuesday granted a request by lawyers for Letterman, host of CBS' "Late Show," to quash the temporary restraining order that he earlier granted to Colleen Nestler.

She alleged in a request filed Dec. 15 that Letterman has forced her to go bankrupt and caused her "mental cruelty" and "sleep deprivation" since May 1994.

Nestler requested that Letterman, who tapes his show in New York, stay at least three yards away and not "think of me, and release me from his mental harassment."

Responding to a question from the judge, Nestler said she had no proof of the allegations she had made against Letterman.

She also said that if Letterman or any of his representatives came near her, "I will break their legs

Now that the restraining had been lifted, she said, "He can actually come for me or send people. I was crazy to have listened to him in the beginning."

Nestler said she began sending Letterman "thoughts of love" after his show began in 1993, and that he responded in code words and gestures, asking her to come East.

She said Letterman asked her to be his wife during a televised "teaser" for his show by saying, "Marry me, Oprah." She said Oprah was the first of many code names for her and that the coded vocabulary increased and changed with time. *AP*

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

DITH Morton, audiences can't like her, but they can't hate her, either.

Top hoofers dance up a storm

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

PEOPLE INVOLVED IN DANCE COMPETITIONS on local TV should watch "So You Think You Can Dance" on ABC-5 every Friday night—and weep. The show is so professionally and imaginatively produced that it shows up other programs for the shoddy productions they are.

Last Friday, the field had been whittled down to seven couples, and we were gratified to see that the tilt's two Fil-Am bets, **Melody** and **Brian**, were still in the running.

Sadly, Melody and her partner were among the three weakest couples that night at least as far as the judges were concerned. Not to worry, though: she survived.

How do we know this? Well, the tilt's episodes were all pre-taped sometime back, and the inside word is that Melody ended up in the competition's No. 2 slot.

In any case, most of the seven surviving couples last Friday did very well indeed. Not only were they extremely schooled, skilled and experienced hoofers, but they were also very creative, so most of their dance routines bristled with technical expertise and artistry.

Compare that with local dance tilts on TV, and the quality gap yawns like a chasm. Over there, choreography is an art. Here, it's practically been replaced by lazy steps and redundant gestures.

This is great pity, because Filipinos are naturally gifted dancers. But the "steps" they're being made to do wouldn't tax the artistry and brain of a grasshopper—which, incidentally, some spastic local dancers resemble.

Another point of departure is seriousness of purpose. Local dancers generally just wanna have fun and show off, while the contestants on the ABC-5 show are obviously bent on winning—with a vengeance.

In fact, they keep trying to outdo each other in thinking up increasingly fancy and difficult steps and dance styles to execute.

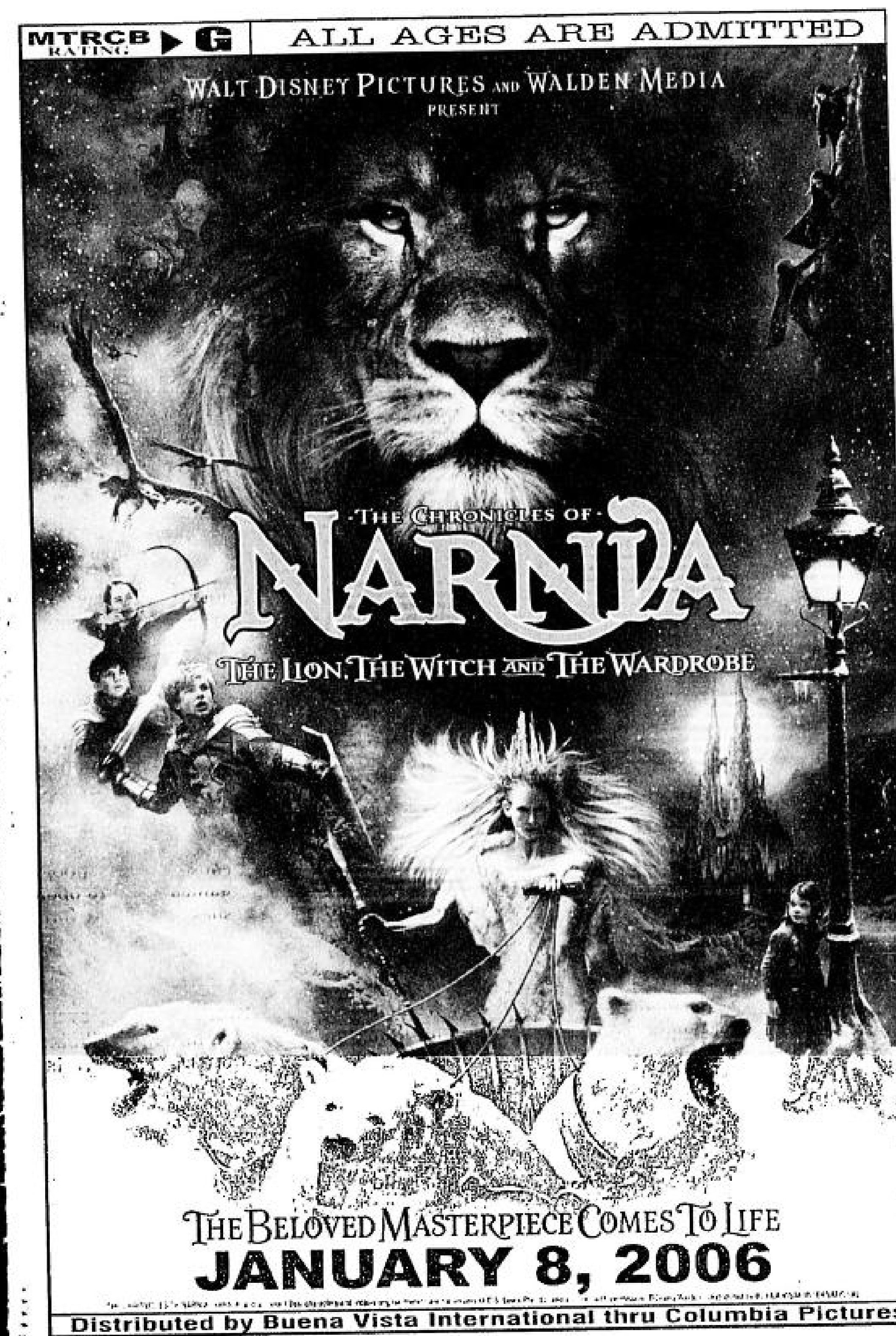
Well, they'll even have to work even harder in the coming weeks, because the tilt is going beyond pairs, and the surviving dancers will have to make their mark as soloists

In a sense, that could be a good thing, because the contestant won't be dragged down by an inept partner. On the *other* hand, the soloist's flaws will be exposed for everyone to see, so each finalist will have to be on his or her best terpsichorean behavior!

On Discovery Channel

"UNSTOPPABLE Wave," the Discovery Channel's acclaimed special, will be replayed tonight at 9. The documentary reveals new geological evidence that seafloor uplift from the 9.2-magnitude Great Sumatra earthquake—not a giant underwater landslide, as previously thought—caused the devastating Dec. 26, 2004 Asian tsunami.

And, starting tomorrow, Discovery will screen 10 hours of the channel's most compelling programs in 2005.



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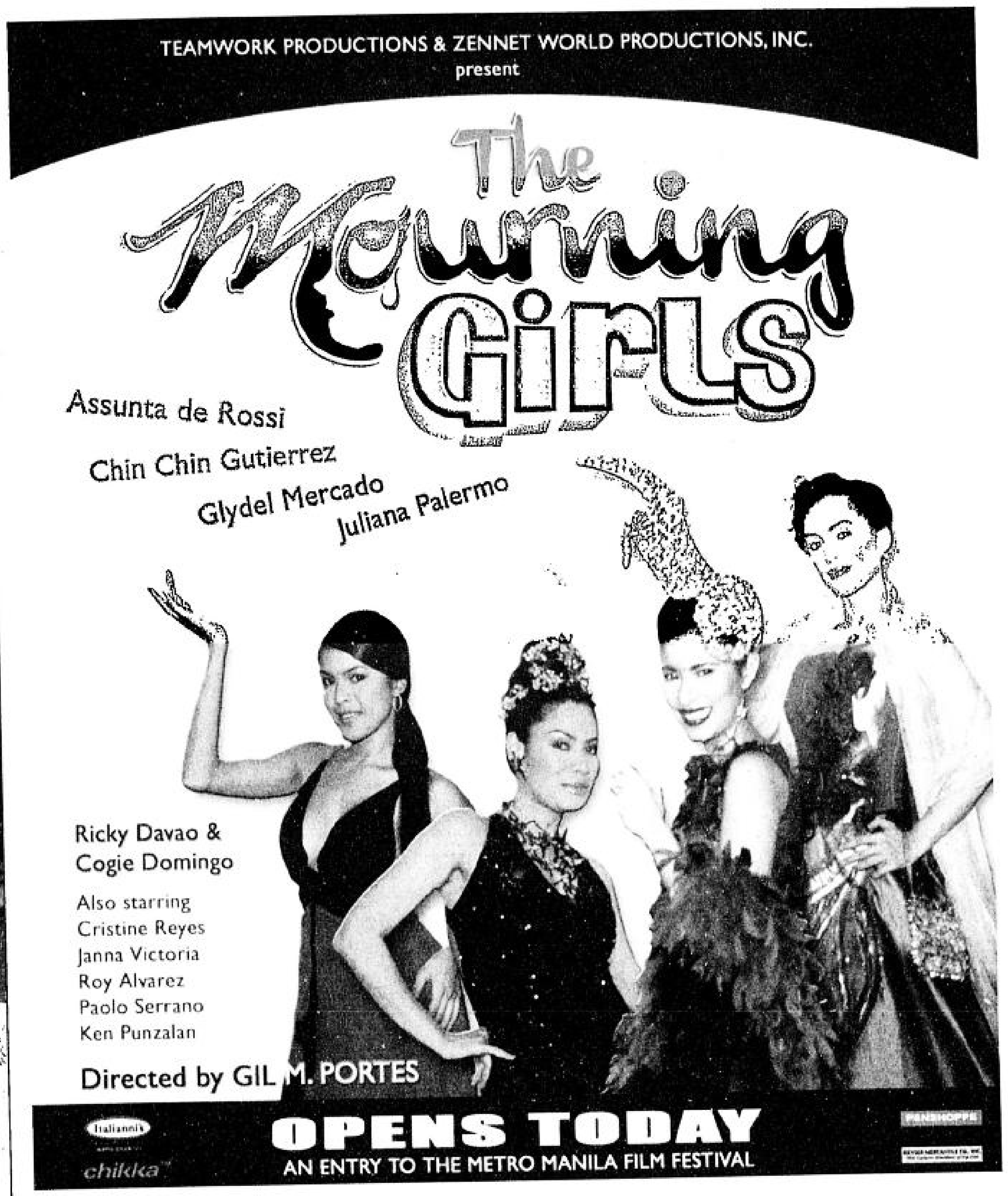

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Directed by GIL M. PORTES
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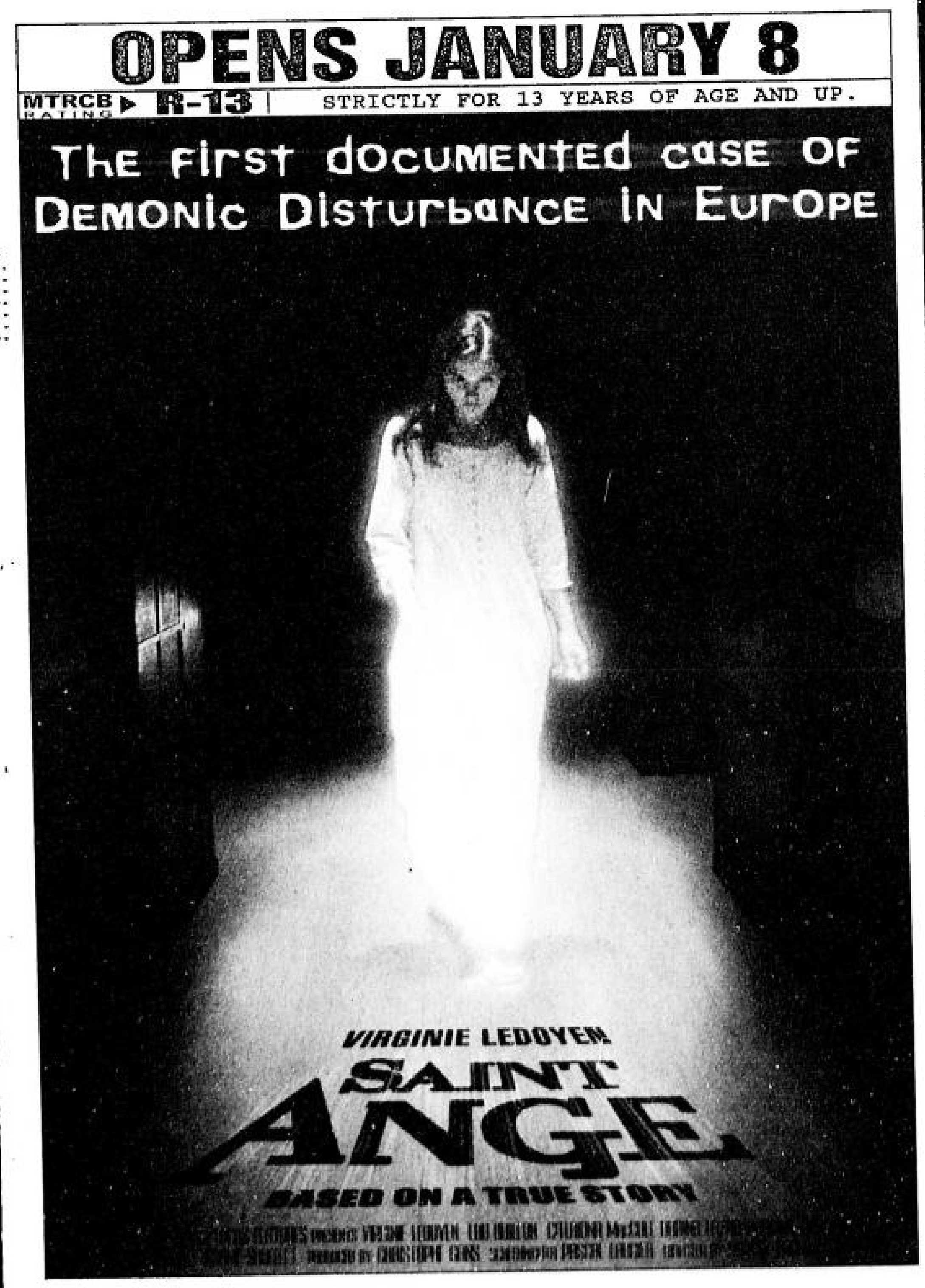
AN ENTRY TO THE METRO MANILA FILM FESTIVAL



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ROUNDUP

RUDY ESPERAS

JASMINE Trias

Jasmine in Ilocos

LINGAYEN, Pangasinan—Jasmine Trias has set concerts in Manila and in the Ilocos from Jan. 5 to 9.

Trias is a special guest in the Hawaii-Philippines Centennial Sister-State Province Tour, which celebrates 100 years of Filipino migration to Hawaii.

Her parents, originally from Cavite, are among those migrants. She rose to fame two years ago when she placed second runner-up in the wildly popular "American Idol" reality talent contest in the United States. *Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

JACK Black AP

'Ecstasizing'

NEW YORK—AS if a giant ape weren't enough to get Jack Black going in "King Kong," the actor says he let loose one time while making the film.

"I had a bit of a lost weekend while we were doing 'King Kong,'" Black, 36, says in the January issue of GQ magazine. "I had a little time off and I did some Ecstasy and I went on a kind of crazy rampage and I started smoking (again)—me and another member of the cast, who will remain nameless, just running and dancing around, drinking and Ecstasizing. And then it was over." *AP*

NEWLY married couple Elton John and David Furnish REUTERS

Honeymoon

VENICE, ITALY—Sir Elton John and Canadian filmmaker David Furnish shopped and lunched at Harry's Bar on Saturday, honeymooning in Venice after tying the knot in a civil union ceremony in Britain this week, news reports said.

The Venice daily "The New Venice and Mestre" featured a photo of the couple on the front page of its Saturday editions, saying that the singer and filmmaker had chosen to spend their honeymoon in the romantic canal city where John keeps a home. *AP*

WILL Smith

Stolen ID

PITTSBURGH—A man who stole Will Smith's identity to run up credit-card debts is going back to prison for two years for violating probation, a judge has ruled.

Judge Alan N. Bloch concluded Tuesday that Carlos Lomax, 45, formerly of Duquesne, Pennsylvania, was "not amenable" to probation.

Lomax was sentenced to 37 months in prison—later reduced to 30 months—after pleading guilty to opening 14 bogus credit accounts at Pittsburgh-area stores using the identity of Willard C. Smith, the legal name of the rapper-turned-actor. Lomax was released from a halfway house in June. *AP*

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G1	1 AKO LEGAL WIFE	2 ENTENG KABISOTE 2	3 SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL	4 EXODUS
G4	1 AKO LEGAL WIFE	2 ENTENG KABISOTE 2	3 THX MULAWIN GUARANTEED SEATS	
	4 TERRORIST HUNTER	5 KUTOB	6 SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL	7 EXODUS
GB1	1 AKO LEGAL WIFE	2 ENTENG KABISOTE 2		
GB3	1 THX MULAWIN GUARANTEED SEATS	2 THX TERRORIST HUNTER GUARANTEED SEATS		
	3 KUTOB GUARANTEED SEATS	4 SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL GUARANTEED SEATS	5 EXODUS GUARANTEED SEATS	
ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER	1 THX MULAWIN	2 TERRORIST HUNTER		
	3 KUTOB	4 SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL	5 EXODUS	
ACC AYALA CENTER CEBU	1 ENTENG KABISOTE 2	2 SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL	3 MULAWIN	4 TERRORIST HUNTER

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ANDREA Del Rosario ANA Capri JAMES Blanco LIZA and Lorena
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MAKIRAMDAM
MATAKOT...
Kutob
DIRECTED BY JOSE JAVIER REYES
NOW SHOWING
OFFICIAL ENTRY TO THE METRO MANILA FILM FESTIVAL 2005

Sunday BIZ
E-mail: pr_business@inquirer.com.ph
Business Features Editor Margie Quimpo-Espino

BELGIAN Ambassador Gregoire Vardakis (left) holds up virgin coconut oil produced by the New Mahayag Cooperative in Catbalogan, Samar.

Getting to know Belgium

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

ASIDE FROM THE chocolates, lace, diamonds and the nuns, Filipinos do not know much about Belgium.

New Belgian ambassador Gregoire Vardakis has thus made it his mission to get the Philippines to know his country a little bit better.

Vardakis admits to Business Monday that Belgium does not easily come to mind in business and social circles in Metro Manila because there have been little direct investments in big-ticket projects over the past few years.

The more known would be the Light Rail Transit-1 project which was put up using mainly Belgian funds and built by Belgian firms.

"The fact is that we are under investing... that's why people don't know much about our country," Vardakis says in an interview.

But ask a good number of nongovernment organizations, cooperatives, farmers and fisherfolk in the countryside, and they will tell a different story.

For what Belgium lacked in investments, it more than made up for in development assistance projects.

Vardakis says that the Philippines is one of the biggest recipients of indirect Belgian aid with Belgian taxpayers providing some 2.5 million Euros a year to the Philippines through nongovernment organizations with quality projects.

The Philippines also used to be on the list of about 18 priority countries for direct, government-to-government aid, but the country was removed recently as the development level has improved.

The 22-million Euro direct aid program will end in August 2007, although it is still subject to review. But Vardakis says that removal from the list does not mean that indirect aid will stop.

On the contrary, funds will

GETTING/ B2

Bali Blends Café, new concept, Great place and great coffee.

Amidst the proliferation of coffee shops in the Philippines found almost all over Metro Manila and key provincial cities, people have become more discriminating when it comes to the taste of coffee and as well as the ambiance of the coffee shop.

Bali Blends Café is proud to have both the great taste of its coffee and the ambiance.

Bali Blends Café's coffee beans come from various regions in Indonesia where the best coffee beans in the world come from.

Apart from that, Bali Blends Cafe customers are given the value added service by taking their orders as they sit down and serve whatever is ordered. Bali Blends Café would like their customers experience to just enjoy their drinks or food through this kind of serice.

This value added service that Bali Blends Café provides to the customer has delighted them and make them feel at home.

After all, most people go to a coffee shop to relax and unwind after a long day work, to discuss some important matters or even just to enjoy a pep talk.

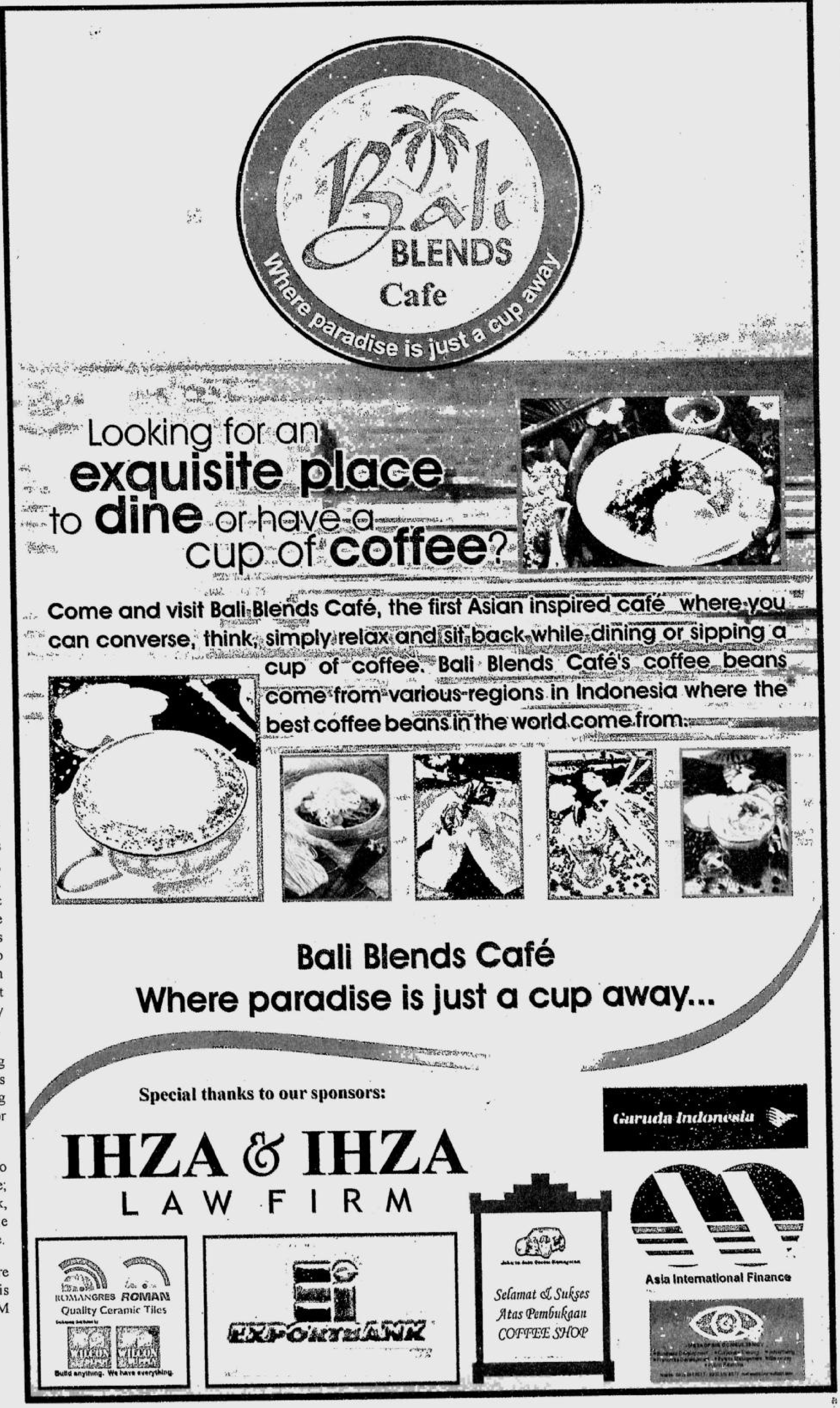
Bali Blends Café does not only serve coffee but also various food --- ranging from appetizer, soup, main course and dessert. All of these are authentic Indonesian recipes but at the same time, Bali Blends Cafe is willing to adjust to the Filipino palates. Hence, a customer can request upon ordering to adjust the taste of the food that is truly palatable to the Filipino market.

Bali Blends Café is also serving breakfast with bottomless Sumatran coffee during breakfast. It is also open for group parties or functions.

Indeed, it is an exquisite place to dine or have a cup of coffee; where one can converse, think, simply relax and sit back while dining or sipping a cup of coffee.

Bali Blends Café --- "Where paradise is just a cup away" is located at SM Mega Strip, SM Mega Mall Building A.

For reservation:
Please call 631-8891.



Bali BLENDS Cafe
Where paradise is just a cup away

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Not a very merry Christmas for RP retailers

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

LOCAL MANUFACTURERS AND retailers took a beating in what turned out to be the "shortest and saddest" Christmas season in recent memory as the government stood by and allowed *tiangges*, run by Chinese immigrants hawking bargain-basement goods from the mainland, to dominate the shopping season.

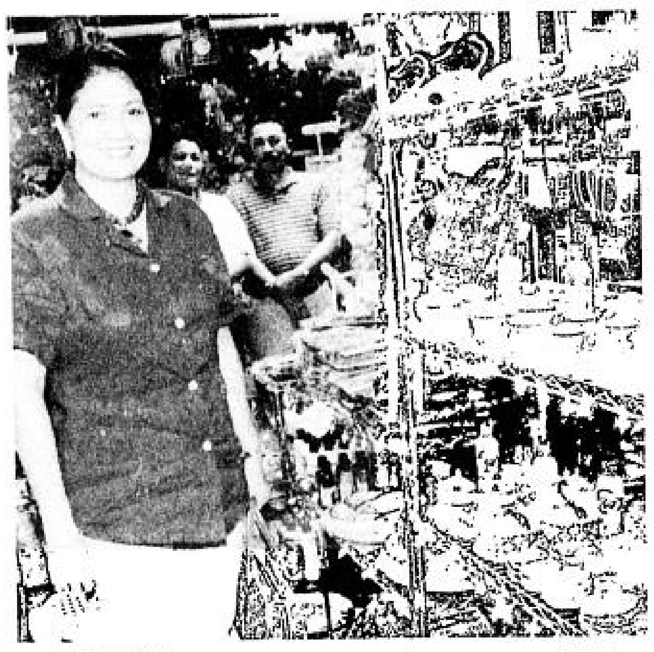
Philippine Retailers Association (PRA) founding chair Samie Lim said President Macapagal-Arroyo must decide soon whether she wanted Filipinos to be competitive in the manufacturing and retail sectors or let the foreigners take over what used to be the pillar of the Philippine economy.

Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry president Donald Dee said: "People say tiangges are good for consumers because they offer lower prices. But I ask them, where will Filipinos get the money to buy if they have no jobs after manufacturers and retailers have closed down?"

Arroyo economic adviser and Albay Rep. Joey Salceda warned of the dire implications of the influx of China-made goods and the hoard of Chinese traders illegally doing business in the country.

"The policy dilemma is whether the Philippines is content to be a nation of traders and consumers or a pass-through economy (we export labor and with their remittances buy goods imported from abroad). The policy imperative is whether to optimize the emerging trend or reverse it and prevent it from bursting," said Salceda.

Salceda noted that employment in domestic manufacturing has fallen to only 1.3 million out of the 32 million-strong labor force, or barely 4.4 percent of the labor force. As of October this year, the economy produced 1.2 million jobs of which only 6,000 were in manufacturing.



CONSUMERS are ecstatic over cheap goods from Divisoria, but not the local manufacturers who are crying over the uneven playing field.

After going through the worst November in terms of sales, Lim said the retailers, the legitimate ones, he emphasized, were hit with another whammy of anemic sales with most Filipinos either flocking to the old shopping district of Binondo, the new Mecca for shoppers this Christmas, or going out of town thereby cutting short the holiday bonanza.

"We used to have 15 solid days of sales every Christmas. Now we only had 10 because of the long holiday and consumers downgrading their purchases," Lim said.

Except for the last few days before Christmas, cash registers were barely ringing in the country's shopping malls (Lim estimated that sales were down by at least 15 percent for most retailers from past years) while Divisoria's tiangges were brimming with shoppers from all income levels, some of whom were willing to pay as much as P100 for a place to park their luxury cars.

"The new phenomenon reflects a shift in consumer preference and is contra-intuitive to the explosion in overseas Filipino workers' remittances that should have triggered an upscaling. Instead, we see an under-grounding or down-trading momentum," Salceda said.

With almost all of the goods sold in these hugely popular tiangges coming from China, Lim said local manufacturers were also taking a hit as bad as the retailers.

"The Chinese-made goods are suspiciously being sold in the country at prices much lower than the mainland," said Lim.

While both local manufacturers and retailers acknowledge the built-in advantage of China with its cheap labor force and undervalued yuan, Lim said the government has exacerbated the situation by its lax enforcement of rules.

Lim said the China-made goods in tiangges were cheap largely because they did not pay taxes and duties.

In contrast, Lim said local retailers operating in shopping malls pay taxes and other fees—10 percent value-added tax; 3 percent of their sales go to the landlord; 2 percent to city hall (local taxes), and there is a 3 percent surcharge if the sales is done through a credit card—and have higher overhead because they pay correct wages, carry inventory and pay rent for 365 days compared to the two or three weeks for tiangge operators.

Lim also rued the government's lack of seriousness in implementing rules meant to ensure a level playing field.

Under the Retail Trade Liberalization Act, businesses with capitals of $2.5 million and below are strictly limited to Filipinos. But Lim noted that most of the operators of the biggest tiangges in the country were from China in clear violation of the rules.

Lim said that if the government allowed this to continue, the manufacturing sector would be decimated and the retail sector would be relinquished to illegal Chinese traders.

That is why, Lim said, it was about time the government took a stand.

Salceda suggested that the government first trace the roots of the problems faced by manufacturers before considering its defensive tools to repel unfair trade practices, such as dumping (wherein countries sell their products to another country at below production prices).

Bus firm tests airline-style road travel to Baguio

By Vincent Cabreza
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau
Photos by EV Espiritu

BAGUIO CITY—TRAVEL TO COOL Baguio is a very big disappointment nowadays, with tourists having to endure five to eight hours of traffic along North Luzon cities to reach the summer capital.

But pay P500 for an experimental bus ride courtesy of Victory Liner, and maybe a road trip to Baguio won't be as irritating.

Since October this year, the firm has been experimenting with a luxury bus that operates like an airline, with a stewardess, huge seat space and a comfort room making each trip "bearable" to the uppity and fastidious, and "relaxing" to the traveling traders, says Ricardo Chan, Victory's Baguio station master.

John Edward Hernandez, Victory's chief of operations, says the firm has concluded after a three-month test that this new road service already beats airlines, and Victory has commissioned the manufacture of a fleet of 10 buses for the Baguio route.

Tourist arrivals have grown as a result, says Shean Bedi, senior marketing officer of the Camp John Hay Development Corp. (CJHDevco).

Bedi says hotels in Baguio have long asked for an "out-of-the-box" solution to the "horrendous journey" tourists have to endure to visit this mountain city, and the "airline service" bus lines appear to be the transport industry's response.

"Our business clients have taken it and we have not received the same kind of complaints hotels usually get for the long journey," he says.

Chan says Victory has invested heavily in upgrading Baguio travel because the city is crucial to its operations. It is the only tourist destination with the fewest lean months, he says.

"Tourists and traders start motoring to Baguio in October and this upsurge of visitors continue to All Saints' Day in November, the Christmas holidays in December, the Panagbenga Flower Festival in February, and Holy Week and the summer holiday in March to May," Chan says.

He says no other tourist destination serviced by Victory Liner has this much commercial opportunity.

The three-month experiment began in October and required four luxury buses to run on shifts ferrying passengers every day.

Each bus is equipped to service up to 29 passengers, unlike ordinary air-conditioned buses, which accommodate up to 49 people.

The luxury bus leaves the firm's terminal in Cubao, Quezon City, at 12:15 a.m. every day for Baguio. From Baguio, another bus leaves at 1:15 p.m. for Cubao.

A stewardess serves passengers in-between meals, sometimes offering them "hot towels," switching on two monitors which screen the latest movies, and ushering them to the comfort room at the back of the bus, says Chan.

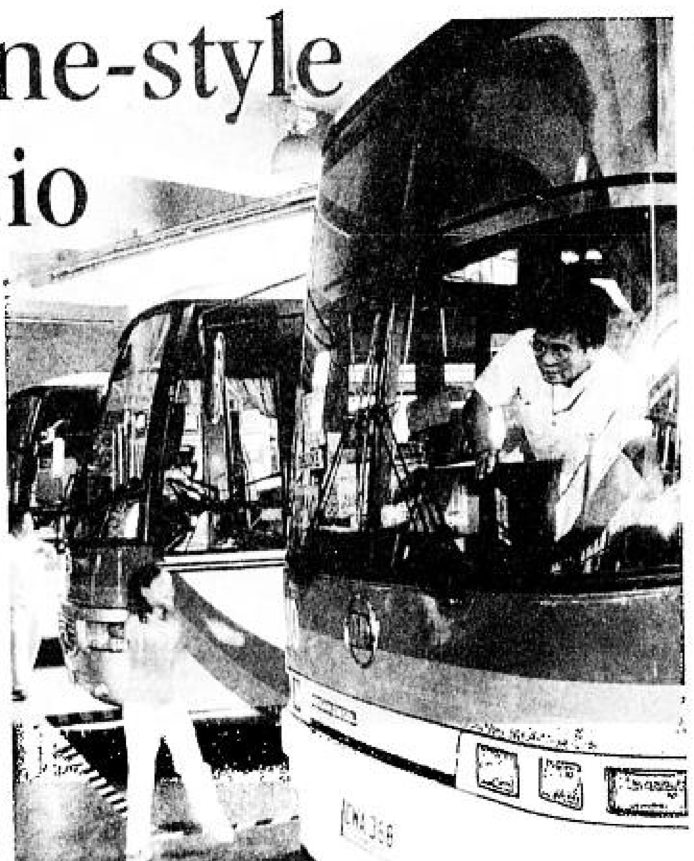
The firm's records show that the luxury buses served more than 3,000 passengers in October, earning the firm roughly P2 million in their test phase.

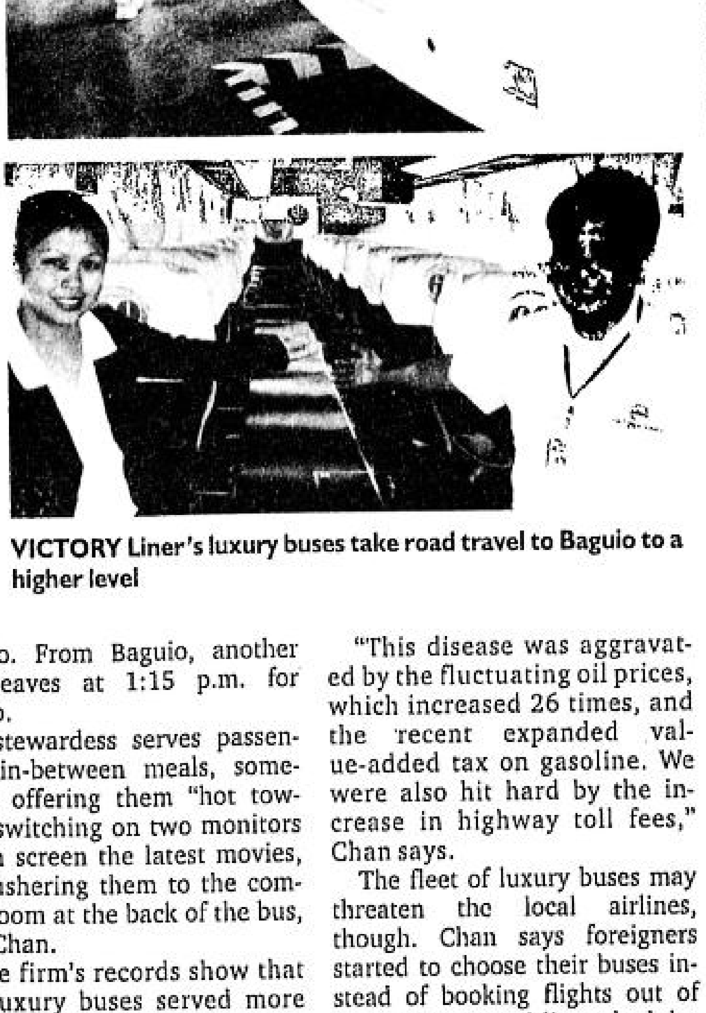
Chan says the profit earned in 2005 was remarkable. It was Victory Liner's poorest year in recent times because of a meningococcemia outbreak that discouraged travel to the city even during the peak tourist season.

"This disease was aggravated by the fluctuating oil prices, which increased 26 times, and the recent expanded value-added tax on gasoline. We were also hit hard by the increase in highway toll fees," Chan says.

The fleet of luxury buses may threaten the local airlines, though. Chan says foreigners started to choose their buses instead of booking flights out of Baguio because airline schedules often rely on this city's unpredictable weather.

"Usually, planes cancel flights because of Baguio's fog, and where else would they go but to the bus terminals? We offer them something like an airline crew, and they realize it's a boon for their businesses," he says.





VICTORY Liner's luxury buses take road travel to Baguio to a higher level

Getting to know . . .

From page B1

likely keep on coming due to the impact that Belgian money has been making on thousands of poverty-stricken families in the Philippines, particularly in Eastern Visayas.

Vardakis recently went to Catbalogan, Samar with representatives from Disop, one of the biggest Belgian NGOs operating in the Philippines, to see the results of some development projects for himself.

The career diplomat was not disappointed.

When he went to meet the Mahayagnons Farmer Multipurpose Cooperative, he learned that the members have learned how to produce virgin coconut oil, and the new trade promises to add significantly to their income.

Virgin coconut oil production is the latest skill that the members are learning through the development program implemented by the Philippine Business for Social Progress with the support of Disop.

Leo Hilado, who oversees the Samar program for PBSP, says the three-year program with Disop is designed to benefit 2,300 families in 12 municipalities—10 in Catbalogan and two from neighboring Jiabong.

It involves developing mariculture technologies to augment the income of the families, as well as the strengthening of the capabilities of the cooperatives to implement their own projects.

Eastern Visayas has cornered a big portion of development assistance funds coursed through Disop because it desperately needs the help.

"There is more need for development assistance here," Vardakis says, "I have the feeling that the standard of living in this part is lower than most."

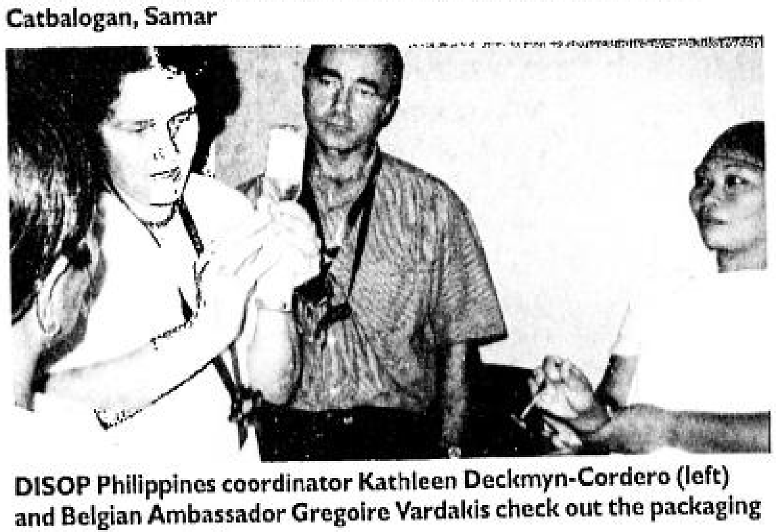
Vardakis, who arrived in the country four months ago, says he intends to visit the other sites where Belgian funds have a presence, saying it gives him a great feeling of satisfaction knowing that Belgian taxpayers' money is doing real good.

"I believe that the Belgian taxpayer is ready to help in development as long as they know the impact on the local population," Vardakis says.

Vardakis says that it is through these social development projects across the country that he hopes the Philippines would get a better idea of what Belgium is all about—more than through the usual investments in business and infrastructure projects.

WELCOME
His Excellency, GREGOIRE VARDAKIS,
Ambassador of Belgium
and Party

BELGIAN Ambassador Gregoire Vardakis (center) leads visit to Catbalogan, Samar



DISOP Philippines coordinator Kathleen Deckmyn-Cordero (left) and Belgian Ambassador Gregoire Vardakis check out the packaging of virgin coconut oil.

Gizmo Advisory Board treats Baseco children to a day of fun

THE JOY OF LEARNING AND DISCOVERY can brighten the life of any child, and those from underprivileged communities are particularly in need of this special gift. Through the Gizmo Advisory Board (GAB), Globe Gizmo Prepaid, Globe's special cellphone service for children, brought a day of fun and wonder to less fortunate children from Barangay Baseco in Tondo, Manila.

The residents of Baseco are currently struggling to recover from the effects of several large fires which ravaged their community. Globe Gizmo and GAB's first ever outreach program brought new hope to these families through the simple act of giving their children a chance to learn and play in a fun, safe, and nurturing environment.

About a hundred Baseco kids enjoyed a tour through the Museo Pambata and a special presentation courtesy of Mad Science. The youngsters, mostly aged 8 to 12 years old and studying in elementary schools near their area, arrived bright and early at the Museo, accompanied by designated chaperons from their community. They were warmly welcomed by Museo Pambata president Dr. Nina Yuson and celebrity parent Anthony Pangilinan, along with representatives from Globe Gizmo Prepaid and The Parenting Company. After having some morning snacks, the children eagerly explored the different rooms of the Museo, led by friendly tour guides.

With the boundless exuberance and energy of childhood, they played with and tried out all the interactive exhibits at the Old Manila, Kalikasan, Body Works, Hanapbuhay, and Tuklas rooms. As their curiosity led them to absorb new facts about Philippine history, physics, biology, and various other topics, the building rang with the children's delighted laughter. Finally, the youngsters gathered at the Tuklas (Science) room to watch a science experiment demonstration by the engaging speakers from Mad Science.

As the children watched in amazement, Mad Science's Awesome Omar and Bionic Berna performed one astonishing feat after another -- complete with smoke, brightly colored fluids, fascinating gadgets and other things that make the world of science so lively and interesting to children. The results of the experiments and the speakers' antics provided much amusement to the youngsters. At the same time, each neat little trick was designed to teach basic scientific facts and principles to these budding young inventors. The group listened in rapt attention and scrambled to participate in the experiments -- proving that, indeed, learning can be lots of fun!

As they assembled for lunch, the children excitedly recounted the morning's activities. Five-year-old Daniel beamed happily as he shared, "Nag-enjoy po ako saka marami akong natutunan." ["I enjoyed it a lot and learned many things."] Meanwhile, a little girl in fifth grade named Regie said: "Masaya po ako kasi natuto ako sa paglalaro at pakikinig." ["I'm happy because I learned through playing and listening."]

The project is part of the GAB's continuing efforts to promote children's right to quality education and Globe Gizmo Prepaid's ongoing contribution to the holistic development of the Filipino child. As the country's first prepaid mobile service for kids, Globe Gizmo Prepaid is committed to providing quality mobile services, as well as enriching and entertaining features, that help kids stay connected with their family and friends, while embarking on a journey of wonder and discovery.

According to GAB member Maricel Laxa-Pangilinan, the board considers it part of their advocacy to "make available unique and positive learning experiences to underprivileged kids." "Through programs like these, we hope to raise the bar for what children can learn and how they are educated. If every child who joined us just remembers this fun educational experience, we would already have planted seeds in their homes, schools, and community that would enable them to have better access to world-class learning," she affirms.

Globe's head of family and afinity, Mutya Laxa likewise stressed Globe Gizmo's pivotal role in providing more educational opportunities to Filipino children: "As the country's first parental advisory body on responsible mobile connectivity for the youth, the GAB seeks to explore new ways to develop a child's full potential. This is in line with Globe Gizmo's overall aim of making communications technology a useful tool for parents in providing proper guidance and care to their children."

For more information on Globe Gizmo Prepaid, call 730-1000.

The Insular Life Assurance Company, Ltd.

SOUTH SEA SURETY AND INSURANCE PARTNERS WITH INSULAR LIFE

South Sea Surety and Insurance Co has partnered with Insular Life Assurance Co Ltd, the first and largest Filipino life insurance company, in offering its employees the Salary Savings Insurance Program. The SSIP is a convenient payment facility for employees of private entities who want to buy ordinary life insurance for themselves and their immediate family members by paying premiums on a monthly mode through salary deductions. Shown in the photo are: (standing from left) Sharon Leano, AM-HRMA, South Sea Surety and Insurance Co, Elizabeth Morales, AVP-reinsurance department, South Sea Surety and Insurance Co, Carlo Ifurung, AM Worksite Marketing, Insular Life, Ofelia Labao, Agent of Ferrari, Aurora DSO 2, Elizabeth Rivo VP-Vismin Ops, South Sea Surety and Insurance Co, (seated from left) Danilo Ubaldo, VP-HRMA, South Sea Surety and Insurance Co, and Lorenzo Luis Gallardo II, SM-corporate accounts department, Insular Life.

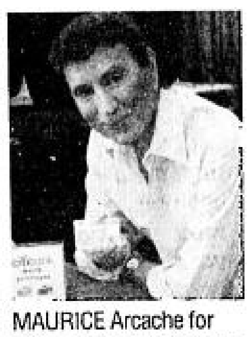
A world of privileges for Citibank user Maurice Arcache

CHIEF SOCIETY CHRONICLER, WORLD-CLASS shopper and globetrotter Maurice Arcache typifies the Citibank cardholder who will appreciate the host of benefits being offered by Citibank World Privileges or CWP, Citibank's privilege program now available to all its cardholders. Which is why it doesn't come as a surprise that the country's leading credit card company has tapped him to sample the many treats in store for Citibank users with CWP.

Touted as the next generation privilege program, CWP features a wealth of exclusive offers, exceptional services and superior benefits that equate to recognition and advantages at over 26,000 establishments in over 30 countries across Asia Pacific and the world.

Leveraging on Citibank's comprehensive local, regional and global knowledge and partnerships, cardholders can take advantage of exclusive discounts, complimentary gifts, upgrades and a range of other exciting rewards.

"I'm thrilled and honored to be chosen as the endorser for Citibank World Privileges," says Maurice. "Citibank is an institution that I will always trust, with services and products that I absolutely have full confidence on. I can't wait to experience the many exciting offerings that CWP has in store for Citibank cardholders like me. Having a Citibank card is like making a wish on a star and having it come true."



MAURICE Arcache for Citibank World Privileges.

According to Citibank cards business director Michellina Triwardhany, CWP is one of the most comprehensive privilege programs in the market that offers perks for dining, shopping, leisure and recreation, as well as travel. "CWP is the perfect fit to the sophisticated lifestyle of Maurice Arcache as well as those of our million cardholders, making spending more rewarding and convenient."

As a spokesperson for CWP, Maurice will be seen in a series of articles coming out in major publications that will offer helpful and relevant tips on how to make the most of shopping, travel and recreation.

To know more about Citibank World Privileges, call the 24-hour CitiPhone at 995-9999 or visit www.citibank.com.ph.

A healthier lifestyle with Orlistat

ORLISTAT (XENICAL), THE FIRST IN A NEW class of anti-obesity agents, acts as a fat blocker to prevent the absorption of excess fats in the food we eat by approximately 30 percent. Fat, being the most concentrated in caloric value, is the main culprit in gaining unwanted pounds. Since the tolerability of Orlistat (Xenical) is inversely correlated to the fat content of one's diet, Orlistat (Xenical) can help assist and guide the dieter to choose eating less fat to help maximize the weight loss benefit that it delivers. As a fat blocker, Orlistat (Xenical) also promotes better constitution by eliminating unhealthy cholesterol.

Aside from these, one added benefit is that Orlistat (Xenical) teaches you how to discipline yourself to avoid food that isn't good for your health. Here are some tips that can help you get started towards living a healthier lifestyle:

- Start your day right with a high-fiber breakfast because it helps boost your metabolism and fills you with fewer calories. Good options are high grain cereals and fruits. Avoid heavy fried food breakfast.
- Don't skip meals. Have smaller in-between snacks that are low in fat, like fruit, low fat milk or cheese and crackers so you never get hungry and binge on food.
- Avoid eating meals with big portions. You don't have to fill your whole plate with food, so try cutting it down to 2/3 or half a plate.
- Avoid eating high-fat foods. Skip bitter or mayonnaise on sandwiches and toast. You can also trim visible fat off meats.
- Use low-fat cooking techniques - boil, grill, roast, poach. Use a non-stick pan that requires no oil. Avoid frying foods.
- Don't eat junk foods like chocolate bars and chips. Stock up on more fruits and vegetables.
- Read labels and aim to buy food with 5 grams of fat or less per serving.

For more "Healthier Lifestyle Tips", you may visit the web site, www.xenical.com.ph and chat with others, or simply calculate your Body Mass Index (BMI) to know how much weight you need to lose. You can also get free advice on weight loss by texting Roche at 0917-805-2468.

A personalized weight loss treatment

THE LONG WAIT FOR THE ONE-STOP AND holistic weight program proven to last is now over.

Medislim, a medically supervised weight management program which boasts of its no-rebound, safe and effective treatment is currently invading the Philippine market. It is widely known in different countries like Thailand, Switzerland, Russia and Ukraine.

Throughout the fourteen years of providing medical services and prescribing personalized weight loss treatment, Medislim method allows no dangerous residue during or after the treatment.

Unlike any other weight loss program, Medislim is tailored to suit individual's needs. The program comprises of two distinct courses: the crucial core "Weight Trimming" process and the distinctive "Weight Stabilization" course which can only be found in Medislim.

For the first course, the desired amount of weight is shed according to the result of the laboratory workups, which will be done by highly trained Medislim professionals. The second course "Weight Stabilization" aims to ensure that there will be no weight rebound. This is what differentiates Medislim from the other weight-loss program anywhere else. Medislim makes it a point to maintain the acquired weight long after the program ends.

There are four programs, which range from four to six months, depending on the desired amount of weight loss. People wishing to lose only about 11 lbs can avail of the "Mild Program" while those who want to lose 22-33 lbs can go for the "Mini Program." "Standard Program" and "Intensive Program" are also available for those wishing to lose 33-55 lbs and 55 lbs and above, respectively. The total package that includes Medislim products, laboratory fee and doctor's fee only range to an unbelievable price of P3,500 to P5,000 per month.

A whole new dimension to the world of medical science and health care business, Medislim is a successful fusion of the latest western medical technologies and the ancient Asian herbal treatment. It aims to permanently carve a niche in the medical and health care world with its latest innovations and technology in combining western medicine with the ancient Asian method of losing weight.

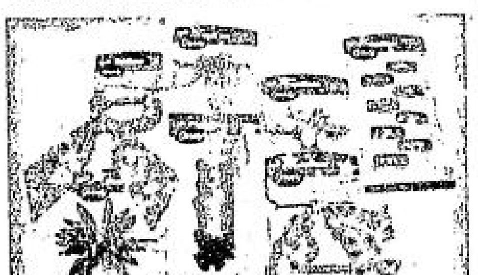
This Weight Loss Program consists of a mixture of herbs and pharmaceutical components combined to effectively cleanse the body and burn off the unwanted fat. The herbal component is made up of various Thai and other Asian herbs, a combination of modern pharmaceuticals and traditional herbal mixtures. Further studies and researches showed that by using herbal medicines to control weight, other health problems of a patient such as hypertension, diabetes, allergies and asthma have also improved.

For inquiries about Medislim, just call 687-9152 to 53 or visit www.stcarlos.com. Medislim professionals are available nationwide through affiliated hospitals and clinics.

Product FILES

'Goody' new trends for the New Year

GIDDY ABOUT HOT HAIR TRENDS COME 2006? Well, no fear, Goody is here. Tame those wavy locks or annoying wisps with Goody's uniquely savvy hair accessories for a look that is sophisticated, stylish and girly-girl. Goody's Deco Nouveau, Moderne and Pixie Dust is deemed to become a hit among local fashionistas. Pastel hues, floral fabrics, and classic frills are among the fine choices to make to transform even the simplest locks to looking noticeably feminine. Goody Products is exclusively distributed by Goody Products Phils Inc and is available in leading department stores nationwide.



HOT LOOPS DONUTS OPENS DOOR TO DEALERS

JG Summit's fast-growing donut business Hot Loops Donuts, is now open for dealership at minimal start-up cost, to give more business opportunities to local entrepreneurs. Hot Loops Donuts, which has introduced novel donut varieties into the market, began operations in December 2004 with its first dine-in shop in Robinsons Place Pioneer. The Hot Loops Dealership Program offers businessmen full, strategic marketing and merchandising support, combined with the JG Summit network base and cost leverage, so dealers can grow their business. The dealership program also gives trainings and re-trainings to ensure quality service from the business partner's employees. It likewise conducts general company orientations on Hot Loops' new product offerings, policies and procedures, and customer service. Photo shows the very first business partner or Hotloops outlet made possible through its dealership program. This store is located in Cherry Foodarama. For those interested in the Hot Loops Dealership Program, call 672-2331, 0922-8195642; fax them at 672-2331; email them at hot-business@hotloopsdonuts.com; or visit them at 113 E. Rodriguez Jr. Ave., Bagong Ilog, Pasig City.

THE 8 MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCES INFORMATION PROGRAM LAUNCHED

AB Food & Beverages Philippines recently launched in partnership with the DepEd the 'MI8 - The 8 Multiple Intelligences Information Program'. AB Food & Beverages Philippines – the makers of Ovaltine, made it part of their corporate social responsibility to advance the knowledge and awareness of the eight multiple intelligences to benefit the children of today. The eight multiple intelligences are: Kinesthetic – body smart, Interpersonal – self smart, Intrapersonal – people smart, Linguistic - word smart, Logical/ Mathematical – logic smart, Musical – music smart, Naturalist – nature smart and Visual – picture smart. Although all of them are different, they are all the same in importance and research shows that everyone has a combination of these intelligences. The MI8 information program is a three-year program that pilots with the third and fourth graders in the participating schools in the Cordillera Autonomous Region and in Regions I to V. Mary Lindbert International is the facilitator and coordinator of the program. The Memorandum of Agreement on the program was signed by the DepEd Secretary Fe Hidalgo and AB Food & Beverages Phil president Vivek Chandra. Hidalgo was the keynote speaker of the event. Advocates for Multiple Intelligences in children: Department of Education Secretary Fe Hidalgo and AB Food & Beverages Philippines president Vivek Chandra, shake hands to seal their partnership for MI8 — The 8 Multiple Intelligences Information Program. With them are the Ovaltine team (from left): Marco Torres, Cynthia Icasas and Regina Pineda, Assistant Secretary Teodoro Catindig and Mary Lindbert president Alberto Rosal. The children represented the eight multiple intelligences in the program's launch.

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RESIDENTIAL

LAGUNA – Calamba	MIN BID
Brgy Lawa, Revelation St, St. Augustine Vill	
1. Lot / Lot 14 Blk 1 / LA 106	276,000
2. Lot / Lot 15 Blk 1 / LA 106	276,000
ANTIPOLO, RIZAL (Lots)	**MIN BID**
3. L 20 B 17, Jerusalem St Ph 5 Brgy.Uulan/LA 120 (via Tikling Junction & Melendres Subd)	299,000
4. L 23 B 10, Cottonwood Hts Bayugo / LA 266 (nr Sumulong)	1,332,000
5. L 21 B 2, Birchwood St, Cottonwood Hts, Bayugo / LA 355	1,778,000
6. Lot 47 Blk 18,Park Ridge Est Ph 3 (via Valley Golf) LA 811	1,852,000
7. L 17 B 1, Beverly St, Sta Barbara 1,Mission Hills,Colaique/LA 1,021 (nr Pines City)	3,692,000
8. H&L, L-7 B-3, Valley Golf Dr. Valley Golf Subd., Mayamot LA 1,961 / FA 107 (nr Ortigas Extn)	4,950,000
CAINTA – Brgy. San Juan	**MIN BID**
near Greenland Subd. & Cainta Municipal Hall	
9. Lots 17,18,19,21&22 Blk-1 & Psu-178259, Victoria Avenue LA-2,808 (near Buenmar St.)	4,400,000
MUNTINLUPA – Alabang	**MIN BID**
San Jose Vill. (infront of Alabang Town Cntr)	
10. Lot / Lot 264 (Pcs 4946), St Joseph St / LA 526 * w/ favorable Court decision in favor of Unionbank	4,381,000
TAGAYTAY CITY	**MIN BID**
between Sta. Rosa, Lag. Short-cut & Aguinaldo H-way	
11. Lot/Lot 8, Tagaytay Calamba Rd.Tolentino West (over looking Taal Lake) LA 2,156 *w/ Lis Pendens	20,000,000
LAS PINAS – Talon Dos	**MIN BID**
12. 2 Sty Thse/ # 475 C,North 11 St, Angela Vill, Brgy Talon 2 LA 68/FA 101 (access via Happy Ville)	1,600,000
QUEZON CITY	**MIN BID**
13. 2 Sty Thse / Unit 10, Golden Shower Exec Hms, # 36 Jose Zabarte,Sr. Ave, Kaligayahan, N'liches LA 42 / FA 65 (nr Sacred Heart Schl)	1,301,000
14. H&L/# 269 M Aquino St Banlat Rd,T Sora LA 120 / FA 191 (near NPC / NIA Subdivision)	1,350,000
MALABON- Brgy. Dampalit	**MIN BID**
North Merville Park I Subd (*w/ occupants)	
15. *L 1 B 14, J Cancio St/LA 186	110,000
16. *Lot 19 Blk 13A / LA 168	130,000
17. *L 53 B 9, D Rosario St / LA 281	290,000
MALABON – Hulong Duhat	**MIN BID**
18. Lot / # 8 Don Basilio Bautista Blvd / Lot Area 886	6,200,000
VALENZUELA – Nr Malinta Exit	**MIN BID**
19. Lot / Lot 551 A 2 A 3, Pineda Compd, Bonifacio St / LA 1,114	2,241,000
20. 3 Sty Bldg/ Lot 894 A 3, Mariano Laurel Drive Paso De Blas LA 463/FA 809 (nr Fortune Vill 4)	4,300,000
ANGONO, Rzl. (via Antipolo)	**MIN BID**
21. Lot / L 6 B 2, Mills St, Sta. Monica Classic Est,Ph 3,Mission Hills Brgy Colaique/LA 540 (nr Pines City)	1,950,000
SAN MATEO,RIZAL-Bo.Patiis	**MIN BID**
22. *Lot / B 15, LA 40,171	2,040,000
23. *Lot / B 16, LA 40,171	2,040,000
24. *Lot / B 17, LA 40,171	2,040,000
25. *Lot / B 18, LA 40,171 * No Right Of Way	2,040,000
BULACAN - MALOLOS	**MIN BID**
26. H&L / Lot 2 & 3 Blk 17,Desta Ave. cor 1st St, Desta Hms Brgy. Atlag LA 515 / FA 293 (near Sto Cristo Diversion Rd)	2,428,000
BULACAN – Sta. Maria	**MIN BID**
Brgy Guyong, Sunrays Vill – beside Delfi	
27. H&L / L 25 B 1 / LA 74/FA 30	370,000
BULACAN – Plaridel	**MIN BID**
Brgy. Lalangan - Plaridel Heights	
28. Cor. Lot / L 2 B 47, LA 355	1,243,000
29. Cor. Lot / L 13 B 7, LA 404	1,414,000
30. Cor. Lot / L 2 B 38, LA 411	1,439,000
31. Lot / Lot 25 Blk 8, LA 350	1,155,000
MAKATI CITY	**MIN BID**
Kingswood Twr - P. Tamo corner V. Cruz	
32. Condo / Unit P2F, Tower B 28th & 29th flrs / FA 154	7,208,000
33. Condo / Unit P3F,Tower B 26th & 27th flrs / FA - 154	7,208,000
TARLAC CITY	**MIN BID**
34. 2 Sty H&L / L 7 B 18, Family Park Homes, Brgy Cut-Cut II San Miguel / LA 62 / FA 40	276,000
35. Lot / Lot 3871 D, Sapang Maragul,Tibag /LA 10,001-nr Arch	2,652,000
NUEVA ECIJA - Cab. City	**MIN BID**
# 529 Pag Asa, Daan Sarili (near LTO)	
36. Lot / Lot 3 A 5 / LA 1,847	401,000
37. Lot / Lot 3 A 4 / LA 1,847	401,000
38. Lot / Lot 3 A 3 / LA 1,848	401,000
39. Lot / Lot 3 A 2 / LA 1,848	401,000
40. Lot / Lot 3 A 1 / LA 1,839	401,000

RESIDENTIAL

CAVITE - Molino III, Bacoor	MIN BID
Central Phase 2, Springville Subd. (Lots)	
41. L 4 B 3, near ClubHse / LA 98	692,000
42. L 6 B 3, near ClubHse / LA 103	727,000
43. L 8 B 3, near ClubHse / LA 142	1,002,000
44. L 24 B 7,MB Villar Ave /LA 120	974,000
45. L 2 B 1, near ClubHse / LA 96	677,000
Madelaine Place, Springville Subd.	
46. Lot / Lot 8 Blk 1 / LA 117	582,000
47. Lot / Lot 6 Blk 4 / LA 120	596,000
48. Lot / Lot 10 Blk 3 / LA 123	611,000
49. Lot / Lot 18 Blk 6 / LA 132	656,000
50. Lot / Lot 19 Blk 7 / LA 132	656,000
Washington Manor, Springville Subd.	
51. Lot / Lot 2 Blk 2 / LA 154	1,020,000
52. Lot / Lot 16 Blk 2 / LA 145	961,000
53. Lot / Lot 18 Blk 2 / LA 162	1,073,000
CAVITE – Carmona (Lot)	**MIN BID**
54. L 28 B 4, Ph 1, St. Andrew St Mla.Southwoods,Cabilang Baybay LA 450 (nr Gate 1) * w/ favorable Court decision in favor of Unionbank	3,005,000
Orchard Res'l. Estates and Golf & Country Club - Salitran, Dasmarinas, Cavite	
FAIRWAY LOTS	
55. Lot 46 Blk 50 / LA 630	2,394,000
56. Lot 49 Blk 50 / LA 582	2,212,000
57. Lot 50 Blk 50 / LA 627	2,383,000
NON - FAIRWAY LOTS	
58. Lot 12 Blk 38 / LA 653	1,959,000
59. Lot 06 Blk 45 / LA 1,085	3,255,000
60. Lot 07 Blk 45 / LA 752	2,256,000
CAVITE- Brgy. Palangue, Naic	**MIN BID**
Mango Orchard Res'l. & Farm Estates	
61. Lot 6 Blk 19A / LA 1,249	1,249,000
62. Lot 5 Blk 19B / LA 3,052	3,052,000
63. Lot 8 Blk 19B / LA 1,890	1,890,000
64. Lot 9 Blk 19B / LA 2,247	2,585,000
65. Lot 1 Blk 24 / LA 1,624	1,868,000
CALOOCAN – Gracepark	**MIN BID**
66. Lot / L 25 & 26 B 31, 2nd St LA 388 (between 3rd & 4th Ave)	3,428,000

COMMERCIAL / AGR.

(SUBJECT TO CREDIT APPROVAL)

QUEZON CITY	MIN BID
67. Building / Lots 8 & 9 Blk S 27 Timog Ave LA 1,380 FA 1,500 (nr Unionbank Br & GMA-7) *on Lease	70,000,000
68. Whouse / 185 Roosevelt Ave S F Del Monte / LA 5,641 FA 3,454 (infront of Watch Twr)	140,000,000
69. Warehouse / # 138 Gen Luis cor Pasacola Rd, Nagkaisang Nayon, Novaliches LA 49,504 / FA 23,384	300,000,000
MANILA – Divisoria (KP Twr.)	**MIN BID**
70. Condo, 2/F, CM Recto Ave cor Juan Luna St / FA 658 *on Lease	28,792,000
MAKATI – Pio Del Pilar	**MIN BID**
near Bangkal, S.Super Hi-way & EDSA	
71. Lot/L 7 B 7,Evangelista St cor Arguelles St / LA 310	13,311,000
72. L 8 B 7,Evangelista St LA 311	11,700,000
Millenium Plaza- Mkti. Ave cor Edugue St	
73. Condo Unit / 5/F, FA 261 (near former International Schl)	17,765,000
VALENZUELA CITY	**MIN BID**
74. Whse / Lot 13 Templanza St D Pedro Vill, Marulas LA 2,540 FA 3,314 (near Savory Rest)	18,209,000
75. Indl Lot w/ 2 Whses (14&16) Barracks, Canteen,Guardhse Lot 1075 D 1 C, Plastic City 6 T. Santiago St, Canumay-West LA 9,923 / FA 7,096	39,703,000
76. Indl Lot w/ Whse / # 47 Maysan Rd / LA 7,871 / FA 7,040 (near Maysan Elem School)	40,702,000
77. Industrial Lot / Lot 382 C Plastic City Housing,Canumay LA 25,798 / (Via T Santiago St & Pinagbayanan St)	45,000,000
SARIAYA - QUEZON PROV.	**MIN BID**
78. Agri Lot w/ resl H&L, Whse & Piggery/Lot 6181 A 5 A 1 A 1 D, E,F,G,I & Lot 6181 A 4,Psd.4A 001202, Bo Sampaloc/ LA 101,038, FA 9,277 (along the Hi-way) * with Lis Pendens	45,053,000
CAVITE - Tanza, Bo. Tres Cruces	**MIN BID**
nr Transville Subd, via Trece Martires	
79. Agri Lot / Lot-2931 (Rs-1273) LA 40,127 * w/ Adverse Claim & No Right Of Way	5,117,000
NUEVA ECIJA - Cab. City	**MIN BID**
# 529 Pag-Asa, Daan Sarili (near L.T.O.)	
80. Agri Lot / Lot 3B / LA 37,041	2,366,000
81. Comml Lot w/ Whse & Offc Lot 2H / LA 2,260 / FA 580	5,098,000
TARLAC CITY – Poblacion	**MIN BID**
82. Lot / Lot 4C, Rizal St / LA 759	8,094,000
83. Lot / Lot 4A, Panganiban St. LA 1,120 (infront of iceplant)	11,943,000

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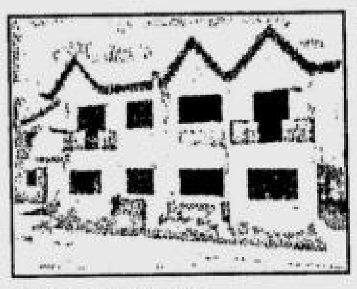

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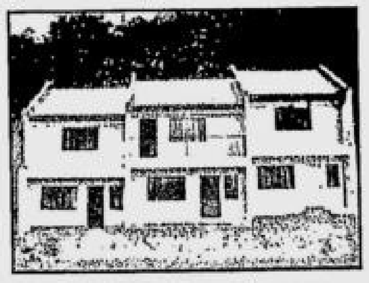

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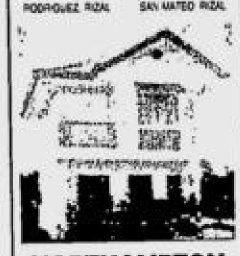

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DepEd Complex, Meralco Ave., Pasig City
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Trunkline 632-1361 loc. 2115

DepED

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The DepED-Bids and Awards Committee (DepED-BAC) invites eligible bidders to apply for eligibility and to bid for printing, packaging, delivery, storing, and retrieval of Reading Test in English and Filipino for Grade III described below:

Package	Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) per Package	Pre-Bid Conference	Bid Submission deadline/ Opening of Bids	Price of Bidding Documents (non-refundable)	End user
Package 1: Reading Test in English and Filipino for Grade III: Printing of Test Booklets, Packaging and Delivery of Test Booklets and Answer Sheets, Storing, and Retrieval of Test Booklets	P 11,525,188.00	Jan. 4, 2006 10:00 a.m. Venue: Bulwagan ng Karunungan, Rizal Bldg., DepED Complex, Meralco Ave., Pasig City	Jan. 16, 2006 10:00 a.m. Venue: Bulwagan ng Karunungan, Rizal Bldg., DepED Complex, Meralco Ave., Pasig City	P4,000.00	NETRC
Package 2: Reading Test in English and Filipino for Grade III: Printing, Packaging and Delivery of Non-Classified Materials	P 600,000.00				
Total	P 12,125,188.00				

Bids received that exceed the ABC per package shall be rejected.

The Bidding Documents shall be available at the BAC Secretariat, Procurement Service, Room 508, 5th Floor, Mabini Bldg., DepED Complex, Meralco Avenue, Pasig City, starting **December 27, 2005** upon payment of the non-refundable fee indicated above.

Bidding shall be conducted in accordance with procedures under the Implementing Rules and Regulations of R.A. 9184, otherwise known as the Government Procurement Reform Act, Information is also available at http://www.deped.gov.ph or www.procurementservice.org or call DepED-PS at Telephone No. 636-65-43 or Fax No. 636-65-42

DepED-BAC reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bids, to annul the bidding process, or declare failure of bidding at any time prior to contract award without thereby incurring any liability to the affected parties.

(Sgd.) **ATTY. CAMILO MIGUEL M. MONTESA**
Assistant Secretary and Chairperson, BAC

(PDI – Dec. 25, 2005 & Jan. 1, 2005)

REPUBLIKA NG PILIPINAS
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
KAGAWARAN NG EDUKASYON
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE
Room 507-508, 5th Floor Mabini Building, DepED Complex, Meralco Avenue, Pasig City, Philippines
http://www.deped.gov.ph ; deped_procurementservice@yahoo.com
Direct Line 636-6543 Telefax 636-6542
Trunkline 632-1361 loc 2085/2115

DepED

Invitation to Apply for Eligibility and to Bid (Re-Bid)

The DepED-Bids and Awards Committee (DepED-BAC) invites eligible bidders to apply for eligibility and to bid on the following services:

Item Description	Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC)	Date/Time		Price of Bidding Documents (non-refundable)	End-user
		Pre-Bid Conference	Submission Deadline/ Opening of Bids		
1. Supply of Services for Comprehensive Maintenance and Support Services for the IT Infrastructure of DepED Central Office	Php 5,400,000.00	January 9, 2006 10:00 A.M. Venue: Bulwagan ng Karunungan DepED Complex, Meralco Ave., Pasig City	January 23, 2006 10:00 A.M. Venue: Bulwagan ng Karunungan DepED Complex, Meralco Ave.,Pasig City	Php 2,000.00	Technical Service

Bids received that exceed the ABC shall be rejected.

The Bidding Documents shall be available at the Procurement Service, BAC Secretariat, Room 508, 5th Flr., Mabini Bldg., DepED Complex, Meralco Avenue, Pasig City, starting on December 27, 2005 upon payment of non-refundable fee indicated above.

Bidding shall be conducted in accordance with procedure under the Implementing Rules and Regulations of R.A. 9184, otherwise known as the government Procurement Reform Act. Information is also available at http://www.deped.gov.ph or www.procurementservice.org or call DepED-PS at Telephone No. 636-65-43 or Fax no. 636-65-42.

DepED-BAC reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bids, to annul the bidding process, or declare failure of bidding at any time prior to contract award without thereby incurring any liability to the affected parties.

(Sgd.) **ATTY. MACUR D. MAROHOMBSAR**
BAC Vice Chairman

(PDI - Dec. 25, 2005 & Jan. 1, 2005)

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Education (DepEd)
SECONDARY EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT AND IMPROVEMENT PROJECT (SEDIP)
National Project Management Office (NPMO)
5th Floor, Bonifacio Building, DepEd Complex, Meralco Ave., Pasig City
Telephone Nos. 635-98-22; 631-0673; Telefax No. 635-9826

DepED

INVITATION TO BID

The Republic of the Philippines through the Department of Education is a recipient of an Official Development Assistance (ODA) loan from the Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC) in the amount of JPY 7.210 million to finance the Secondary Education Development and Improvement Project (SEDIP). It is intended that part of the proceeds of the loan will be utilized for eligible expenditures for the new construction of the different school buildings in the province of Negros Oriental as follows:

Project Description	School	Location
One-Storey Science Laboratory Building One-Storey Home Economics Building One-Storey Industrial Arts Building One-Storey Four Classroom Building with Toilet One-Storey Library Building with Guidance & Faculty Room	Jose P. Caedenas MHS Uptown Annex	Canlaon City
One-Storey Two Classroom Building	Actin NHS	Basay
One-Storey Two Classroom Building	Maglinao NHS	Basay
One-Storey Industrial Arts Building	Maloh PCHS	Siaton
Two-Storey Four classroom Building with science laboratory and Toilet	La Libertad NHS	La Libertad

JBIC requires that bidders and contractors as well as the DepEd, under contracts funded with JBIC ODA loans, observe the highest standard of ethics during the procurement and execution of such contracts. In pursuance of this, JBIC: (i) will reject a proposal for award if it determines that the bidder recommended for award has engaged in corrupt or fraudulent practices in competing for the contract in question; and (ii) will recognize a contractor as ineligible, for a stated period of time, to be awarded a contract funded with JBIC ODA loans if it, at any time, determines that the contractor has engaged in corrupt or fraudulent practices in competing for or in executing another contract financed by JBIC ODA loans or other Japanese ODA.

Bidding is open to all Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board (PCAB) registered contractors or joint venture contractors with valid license, general building in category and eligible to enter into a contract based or award. Schedules of issuance of bidding documents, pre-bid conference and opening of bids are as follows:

Particulars	Canlaon City	Basay	Siaton	La Libertad
Issuance of Bid Documents	Date : Jan. 18, 2006 Place : BAC Office	January 18, 2006 Municipal Hall	January 18, 2006 Municipal Hall	January 18, 2006 Municipal Hall
Pre-bid Conference	Date : Jan. 24, 2006 Place : BAC Office Time : 1:00 PM	January 23, 2006 Municipal Hall 9 AM & 2:00 PM	January 25, 2006 Municipal Hall 2:00 PM	January 26, 2006 Municipal Hall 2:00 PM
Opening of Bids	Date : Jan. 30, 2006 Place : BAC Office Time : 1:00 PM	January 27, 2006 Municipal Hall 10:00 AM & 2:00 PM	January 31, 2006 Municipal Hall 2:00 PM	February 2, 2006 Municipal Hall 2:00 PM

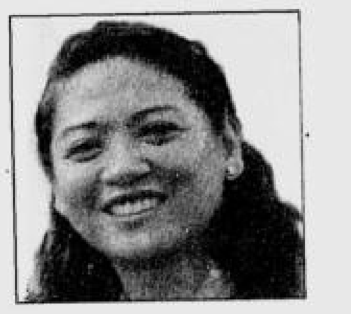
The complete set of bidding documents may be purchased by interested eligible bidders upon submission of a Letter of Intent to the Office of the BAC Chairman and payment of a non-refundable fee of P2,000.00 to the Cashier's Office.

Submission of Bids together with all the documents required in the bid documents must be delivered to the aforesaid venue and dates. All bids will be opened immediately thereafter in the presence of all bidders or their legally authorized representatives.

(Sgd.) ATTY. MACUR D. MAROHOMBSAR
Vice-Chair, Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI – January 1 & 8, 2006)

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC



The MANAGEMENT of **VICTORIA WAVE LIMITED, INC., VICTORIAN WOODWORKS, INC.** and **PANEL SYSTEMS CORPORATION** hereby inform the public that ***MRS. JENNY GIRON SANTIAGO*** is no longer connected with these Companies.

Thus, any transaction made and entered by Mrs. Santiago after 01 November 2005 without prior authorization of Management shall no longer be honored by us.

(PDI - Jan. 1, 2006)

Republic of the Philippines
PROVINCE OF NEGROS ORIENTAL
Bids and Awards Committee
Capitol Area, Dumaguete City
Tel/Fax # (035) 225-2433

The Provincial Government of Oriental Negros thru the Bids and Awards Committee invites interested bidders to pre-qualify and submit sealed proposals for the lease of a building space previously occupied by ALMER S of Opeñas located at the Ground Floor of the old D.P.H. Building beside the Prasevilla Tennis Courts and with a Floor Area of 255.87 sq.m.

Prospective bidders are advised that the lease of the said building space shall be for a period of two (2) years renewable upon agreement of both parties and shall be for Cafeteria purposes only. The minimum bid is set at P8,000.00/month.

Submission and opening of bids is scheduled on January 17, 2006 at 10:00 in the morning at the Provincial General Services Office, Capitol Area, Dumaguete City.

All interested bidders may conduct an ocular inspection of the premises before the schedule bidding.

The Bids and Awards Committee reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive any required formality and award the contract to the bidder whose bid proposal as evaluated by the Committee is the most advantageous to the government, nor to indemnify the bidders for any expense or loss that may be incurred in the preparation of bids, nor does it guarantee that an award will be made.

(Sgd.) **ATTY. ISMAEL P. MARTINEZ**
Provincial General Services Officer
Chairman, Bids & Awards Committee

(PDI - Jan. 1, 2006)

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OBITUARIES

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TIRSO "TG" PARPAN, II

on his **10th Death Anniversary**
January 1, 2006

Masses for the eternal repose of his soul
are being said today at

St. Alphonsus De Liguori, Magallanes at 6:00 p.m.
Sta. Maria Della Strada, La Vista at 6:00 p.m.
St. James the Great, Ayala Alabang at 6:00 p.m.
Santuario de San Antonio, Forbes Park at 4:30 p.m.

We ask you to pray with us for him.

Charry, Lara, Scho & Tim
Rufi & Lalyn, TJ & Liza
and Grandchildren

"Keep me, O God for in You I take refuge."
Psalm 16:1

MARIA YBARDOLAZA-ABADILLA

Peacefully joined her Creator on 30 December 2005
at the age of 88.

Wife of CECILIO (†); children **Ariel & Nerissa, Lulu & Ray, Corrie & Paquito, Flor & Fred**; grandchildren, great grandchildren, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for her eternal rest and everlasting happiness.

Her remains lie in state at the Funeraria Nacional, 264 Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be on Monday, January 2, 2006, 3 p.m. at Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina after the 1 p.m. Mass at Funeraria Nacional.

In lieu of flowers, spiritual bouquets will be appreciated.

SIXTO DIMARANAN VERACRUZ Ed. D.

Retired Asst. Superintendent Div. Of City Schools Cavite City
of Biñan, Laguna; Mandaluyong City & Toronto, Canada

Peacefully joined his Creator at the age of 85.

He will be lovingly missed by his wife **ANGELITA LUGAR VERACRUZ**; children **DANTE & MARYANN, LOIDA & TONY, BENG, ERIC & MARINA**; grandchildren **MEGGIE & BELA, HOMER, IRWIN & CHERRIE, IRIS, RYAN, RACHEL & JONATHAN,** and **PAOLO**. Friends & relatives request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

Interment was held yesterday, December 31, 2005 in Toronto, Canada.

CRESCENCIANA Madamba-ALBANO

(widow of the late **Engr. Sotero E. Albano** of Dingras, Ilocos Norte)

Joined her Creator on 28 December 2005
at the age of 93.

Her bereaved children; **Judge Angelo** and **Dra. Bibiana Caoili; Eusebio** and **Erlinda Enriquez; Rev. Fr. Policarpo** and **Ma. Rosario**, grandchildren: **Margaret Frances; Karla Modesta; Oliva Marie; Vincenzo Angelo; Paul Vincent** and **Aileen Ignacio; Patricia Anne; Jhoanna Lou** and **Mary Judith**; great-granddaughter: **Anya Danielle**; nephews and nieces; other relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at the family residence in Bgy. Albano, Dingras, Ilocos Norte.

Interment will be on the 7th of January 2006 at Dingras Municipal Cemetery after the 7:30 a.m. Mass at the St. Joseph Parish Church.

CARLOS GOCHUYU

Now rests in the infinite warmth and embrace of our Lord.
He joined our Creator and his wife ***RUTH TANGIMKIN***
on the 29th of December 2005 at the age of 85.

He will be missed by his children **ANTHONY, LUCY & MANUEL, ALBERT & MARILYN, NANCY & DANIEL, ALEXANDER & SUSAN, JUDY & FRANK JR., EMILY & RUBEN**, grandchildren and great grandchildren.

His body lies in state at Arlington Memorial Chapels, 12 G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be on Wednesday, the 4th of January, 2006 at the Everest Memorial Park after the 8:00 a.m. necrological service at St. Stephen's Parish.

An obituary with a picture can be a fitting tribute to your departed loved one.

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❶ Copy of Death Certificate ❷ Any identification document (I.D.)

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Shell congratulates G. Liner on their 50th Anniversary!

Sunday LIFESTYLE

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or email us at lifestyle@inquirer.com.ph

Editor Chelo Banal-Formoso

The best and the worst of Lifestyle 2005

IT WAS THE YEAR WHEN luxury ruled fashion, the iPod was on everybody's pocket or wish list, Virgin Coconut Oil was the miracle cure, and 'Pinoy Big Brother' was the nation's ticket to voyeurism. It was a year like no other but also a year of more-of-the-same—a year of both elegance and tackiness, a year with its share of the tasteful and the distasteful. Quick, send in the clowns!

Fashion highs and lows

Balikbayan RTW great Cesar Gaupo, who after years of designing in Hong Kong for Shanghai Tang, returned to the local fashion scene with a bang. His poolside bridal show in May proved he remains one of the best designers in the business. Later, he launched his designer shoes under the John Kenner brand.

Emergent talents such as Mitzi Quilendrino, Gian Romano, Yvonne Quisumbing-Romulo and Patty Eustaquio, who energized fashion design. James Reyes and Joey Samson were also seen to have joined the big league.

Ivarluski Aseron was perhaps the year's biggest young achiever. There was never a dull moment in the thirty-something's designs. His star may shine brighter this year.

Inno Sotto, who mourned the passing of longtime partner Richard Tann, but later transformed sorrow to creative demiurge through a gala show that triggered fashion fireworks (the show at Shangri-La Makati in fact was marred by a brief fire). Here was one designer who literally wore his grieving heart on his sleeve.

Trends that transcend their milieu and era such as the various permutations of the ruffled, Victorian-inspired empire-waist top, which got a meteoric anointment when Auggie Cordero closed the Metro Wear fashion show last month with show-stopping black silk chiffon gowns that were met with thunderous applause. The romantic vibe may be perfect for spring/summer's more womanly look.

Other holdovers that may get bigger this year are skinny jeans and slim trousers. Time to give those flares and bootcut jeans a rest.

LOCAL fashion's biggest newsmakers in 2005 and their respective creations: Inno Sotto's billowing red halter inspired by "Turandot;" Cesar Gaupo's black backless number for the *ninang* (principal sponsor) with an attitude; and Ivarluski Aseron's nude column with a series of ruched details.

Ria Bolivar, Isabel Roces, Raya Mananquil and the ever-reliable Jo-Ann Bitagcol, who were the muses of 2005.

Among male models, quite inspiring was the rise of the ruggedly handsome Rocky Salumbides, a former *balut* vendor who's now at the top of the modeling game in Singapore.

Victor Basa, Zanjo Marudo and Einar Ingebrigsten also raised fashionistas' temperatures.

The boho look which, together with the ubiquitous pheasant, er, peasant skirt, has reached nauseating heights. It's about time fashionistas bury it.

The omnipresent bolero, which now comes in tacky knits and cheap beadwork, should also be relegated to the bodega. *Tama na! Sobra na! Itago na!*

Stylists and fashion journalists *kuno*. The ever-merry glossy magazine scene has meant the entry of new photographers, stylists, editors, writers—and pretenders and interlopers. Never has fashion journalism been as ubiquitous and as mercenary. This year may yet see the charlatans exposed. Style *n'yo bulok!*

Beauties and some beasts

Dove's Campaign for Real Beauty, which celebrates beauty in its diverse and mundane forms—flabs, gray hair, warts and all. In an era where social and media standards for beauty exclude women who don't fall under the Supermodel, Beauty Queen, Movie Star categories, Unilever's radical campaign worldwide features "real women" with otherwise socially regarded beauty flaws. It may take some time before Filipinos can be weaned from their media-influenced bias for western standards of beauty, but this is a start.

☐ dark'
I dazzling?

DOVE'S anti-beauty campaign

Naturally wavy (or digi-curled) and sassy mane. Women have finally realized it's no longer cool to look like they're all hapless wannabe shampoo commercial models, giving their locks a rest from the *looong* hours of merciless straightening and rebonding.

Banishing wrinkles without going under the knife. Thermage, the non-invasive procedure that promises tighter, younger-looking skin, involves no incision and instead uses a radio-frequency technology to iron out the kinks of facial skin. The treatment is expensive but it lessens the likelihood of women looking much like the Frankenstein monster, post messy surgery.

"Re-blah-nded," er, rebonded, hair. Unless one has a shampoo-endorsement contract, chemically straightened hair is out! In fact, one Hollywood stylist on a Manila visit grimaced at the sight of the seemingly uniform long, reedy hairstyles of Filipinas, and dismissed the look as "so five years ago."

Shampoo hardsell. Shampoo makers have used every inanity to peddle their products—a woman gets a promotion owing to her long, long hair; another gets her beau's approval for having kept her hair long... Enough! Rapunzel belongs to fairy-tale books!

GREAT-LOOKING wavy locks

When Chic hits the fan
Celebrity and fashion confessions of a former magazine editor
by Kitty Go

Kitty Go will never eat lunch in this town again, and she doesn't care

Chic read of the year

KITTY GO'S "CHIC" SERIES OF BEST-selling novelettes on the antics and foibles of Manila's rich and infamous. Both tell-all books masquerading as snippets of fiction were met either with glee or disdain, depending on which side of the fence you're in.

"When Chic Hits the Fan" and its sequel, "Chic Happens," have afforded lesser mortals a peek into the seamy lives of the perfumed set as well as those engaged in the sport known as social rappelling. They have also led readers to play guessing games as to the characters' real identities.

Months after they were launched, the two books have become staple topics at parties, albeit whispered in hushed tones for fear of offending supposed victims.

Those who felt alluded to are reportedly holding exclusive parties to bash the author and people sympathetic to her. Kitty, of course, is not expected to make it to the guest list. Go, girl!

From the author of the controversial bestseller When Chic Hits the Fan: Celebrity and Fashion Confessions of a Former Magazine Editor
Chic Happens
An explosive celebrity and fashion insider account
by Kitty Go

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CENTRAL RESERVATIONS OFFICE
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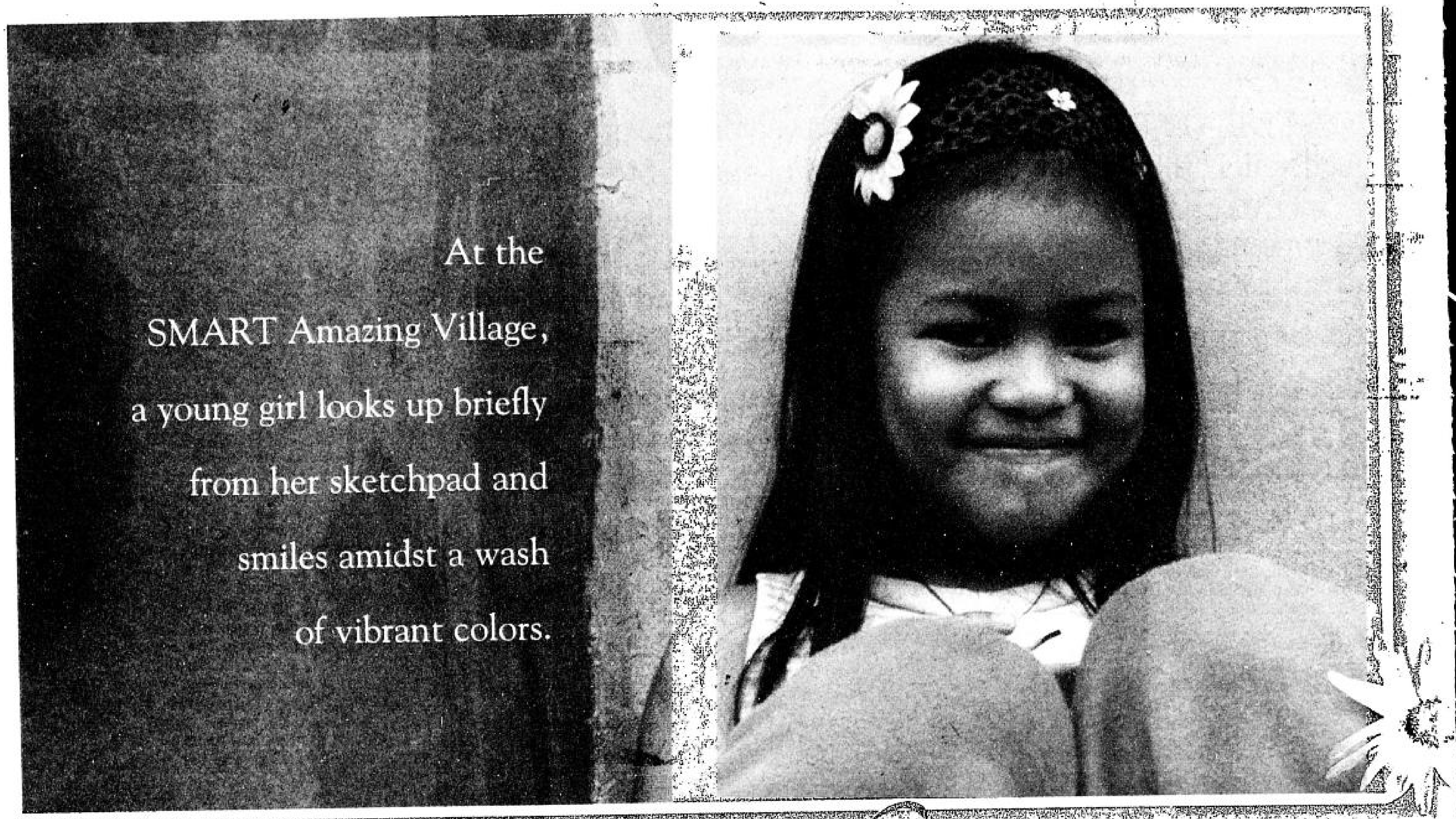
THE YEAR OF

The Year tha



At the
SMART Amazing Village,
a young girl looks up briefly
from her sketchpad and
smiles amidst a wash
of vibrant colors.

Merry Christmas and

Helping people
help themselves,
this is SMART's
higher business.

Businesses do transform societies even in ways unseen and unfelt. The very nature of commerce spurs development filtering down to a nation's communities. But at times companies have to take a more active hand in redirecting that development, in alleviating the very causes of poverty.. That's exactly the strategy SMART has embarked on with its proactive social development programs, namely the SMART Entrepreneurial Program (SEP) and its sponsorship of the SMART Amazing Villages in Mindanao, Quezon, and Tondo.

SEP, the acclaimed entrepreneurial lecture series making its way to every scholastic audience north and south of the country has already spread its message to 55 institutions with just over 18,000 attendees. This landmark program has recently made important headway in Mindanao.

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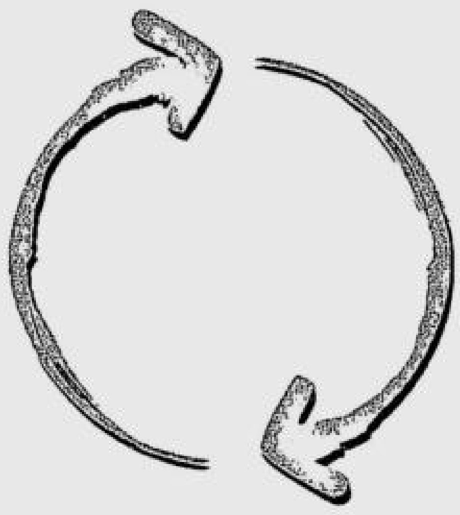


It's about the opportunities
we provide.

a Happy New Year!

Also in this southern region, another legacy of SMART community development is taking root. The SMART Amazing Village with Gawad Kalinga has already built 80 new homes in Mindanao, taking off from the early success of 100 homes built at the Amazing Village in Baseco, Tondo, Manila. SMART Amazing Villages continue to be showcases of cooperation between business and community, wherein business provides the capital and inputs and community members provide their own sweat and muscle in building their homes.

This is the steadfast vision of SMART's community development projects, not only of giving back to the community in the form of simple dole-outs, but giving them back their self-respect by enlisting their own efforts and ingenuity in bettering their lots. Helping people help themselves, this is SMART's higher business.

OTHER MOMENTS TO REMEMBER

MVP CUP
For the first time in badminton, two continents were set on a seismic collision. The 1st Manuel V. Pangilinan Cup had us expecting big things from the start when organizers announced a continental play format, when some of the biggest names were confirmed to play, and right up to the colorful opening at the Philsports Arena. This paved the way for our quest to continue helping Filipinos strive for excellence and to prove that we are indeed capable of brilliance when we put our hearts and our minds to it.

LEAD TO GOLD
Knowing full well that Philippine sports needs all the help it can get, SMART and PLDT recently joined forces with the Ateneo Sports Fund Campaign (AFSC) in looking for the next generation of sporting champions. SMART will lead the way in growing young talent in two main sports: badminton and soccer. PLDT will develop the most promising badminton athletes in a sport that has been booming in recent years. For its part, SMART will carry the torch for the country's first fully supported crop of world-class soccer athletes. In ten years, SMART aims to send a Filipino squad to the Tiger Cup (the region's own version of the World Cup) not just to participate, but to win the gold.

SMART SUPPORTS THE PHILIPPINE TEAM TO THE 2005 CHINESE TAIPEI SATELLITE BADMINTON CHAMPIONSHIPS
Following the resounding success of the MVP Cup, SMART then threw its support behind the Philippine badminton team as it headed to Douliu, Yunlin, Taiwan. The top shuttlers in the country competed in the 2005 Chinese Taipei Satellite Badminton Championships from August 31 to September 4, 2005. With so much focus now being given to badminton, the leader in wireless is proud to be a pioneer in recognizing the love affair Pinoys have been having with the sport. The national team players who participated in the tournament were Kennevic and Kennie Asuncion, Lloyd Escoses, Rodel Bartolome, Ian Piencenaves, Arolas Amahit, Jr., Jaime Junio, Owen Lopez, Mark Natividad, Marlon Villarin, Christopher Flores, Paula ObaÒana, Irene Chiu, Karyn Velez, Vanessa Tanco, and Amanda Carpo.

PHILIPPINE FOOTBALL FIESTA
Barotac Nuevo in Iloilo is the soccer capital of the Philippines. The town has produced many astounding players who have reached nothing less than the nationals. It was the perfect venue for the 1st Philippine Football Fiesta proudly supported by SMART. More than 1000 children from around the Visayas and Manila gathered for the event, which was challenging yet festive and friendly. More than soccer, it was about sportsmanship and brotherhood.

SMART SUPPORTS ADORE 2005: A CALL TO HOLINESS
SMART Communications lent its full support to ADORE 2005, a Eucharistic Marian Youth Congress, held at the World Trade Center from Jan. 14-16, 2005. Organized by the Alliance of the Holy Family International, the three-day congress saw over 6000 participants (mostly students from Catholic schools) attend daily from different parts of the country. According to Project Coordinator Leonila Regala, the thinking behind this event was to bring back respect and reverence to the church. The conveners accomplished this through a series of lectures, masses, and testimonials from various individuals, most of whom are students themselves who have given their lives to Christ.

FILM ACADEMY OF THE PHILIPPINES
Score it as another triumph for Filipino movies. Without missing a beat, this year's Film Academy of the Philippines (FAP) awards was a heady encore for last year's event. We're looking forward to ever higher achievements that this year's awards have inspired. Because for SMART, it's not just about the movies. It's about supporting our home grown artists in the local film industry.

The best and the worst of Lifestyle 2005

ILLUSTRATION: ALBERT G. RODRIGUEZ

Fitness in's and out's

Diet-conscious fast foods. It may be a modest step but at least fast-food joints are trying to clean up their image as the main provider of stuff that make people obese and unhealthy. Even global hamburger chain McDonald's has added salads to its menu.

Recycle-active local governments. Some Metro Manila officials may not believe that ordinary people can appreciate the merits of and practice garbage segregation and recycling. But many towns and municipalities have successfully educated their constituents on how to keep their environment clean and reduce trash. In Puerto Princesa City, for instance, cleanliness seems to have become so instinctive that a vendor immediately whips up a plastic bag to catch an unwitting tourist's trash before it falls to the wet floor.

Corporate cleanup. Several big businesses have taken steps to clean up after themselves and properly dispose of waste from the production process, packaging and others. The multinational Tetra Pak has set up collection points in a growing number of schools for its used cardboard containers while Unilever, a consumer-product manufacturing giant, treats its waste water before releasing it into the Pasig River. Mirant, the energy producer, is into mangrove reforestation to help soak up the carbon dioxide and other gases released by internal combustion (car) engines.

Consumer-friendly businesses. Establishments that exchange defective goods without much ado are growing in number. Those that refuse to replace damaged goods are becoming more the exception than the rule.

The spa and fitness *bara-bara*. Some people seem to think a couple of barbells, some dumbbells, a bathtub or a huge basin, a gym and a spa make. "Fitness" centers have sprouted in the most unlikely places—sometimes they are no more than just a square space with galvanized iron sheets for roof and walls. Who is regulating these places? Gyms and spas need expert supervision, not just anyone who can raise a barbell over his head or wield a wet sponge.

The neither-here-nor-there anti-smoking law. The law is gasping for breath, if it is not dead yet. Except for restaurants, movie houses and a few other confined spaces, the law is blithely ignored by most people.

"Promising" food supplements. You see them in supermarket and drugstore shelves—food supplements which promise everything from relieving constipation to lowering cholesterol and blood pressure, and preventing (even curing) cancer and diseases that have to be discovered. But take a good look. After making all those fantastic claims, the bottom label reads that the Bureau of Food and Drugs says the supplement has no proven therapeutic value.

2005 hits and misses for the younger crowd

Mobile music. The whole world gave iPods the thumbs up this year. We think iPods rock, but a lot of other mp3 players do, too.

C2, the healthier alternative to soda.

Nationalism, music-wise. Pinoys' passion for local sounds intensified in 2005 with so many fans embracing countless local bands.

Celebrities dropping by for a visit—from Neil Gaiman, Greg Behrendt and two of "Queer Eye"'s Fab Four to music hotties Michael Bublé, Constantine Maroulis and MiG Ayesa.

Tech-savvy young entrepreneurs. They shone this year with their creativity and talents, selling most of their wares online, using Multiply pages, their own websites, E-bay and other popular discussion boards. Now we can all go shopping online for clothes, bags, shoes and accessories, even without credit cards!

This bazaar-crazy city, translating to discounts, bargains and a great opportunity to discover new brands and products.

IPOD, therefore iAm

FANS lined up as early as 4 a.m. and as long as 10 hours to get close to author Neil Gaiman.

Txtnonstop. Globe Telecom gave heavy prepaid SMS users a treat by offering the TXTNONSTOP promo.

Reality TV shows losing their power. Thanks to shows like "Desperate Housewives" and "Lost," people are starting to remember that there is more to TV than just crappy reality TV shows.

Local bands ripping off foreign songs, and bands and singers gaining popularity with endless remakes.

Voyeurism. People, there is life outside of "Pinoy Big Brother."

HELLO, sore thumbs. Globe's Txtnonstop was a big hit.

Delusional actors. We watched a politician-slash-actor brag on TV that his movie's special effects can compete with "The Lord of the Rings."' Excuse Peter Jackson while he has a heart attack. Sure, we're all for the development of local cinema but let's not get carried away. Ah, pride vs delusion.

Online escort services. Now people no longer have to drive around the city's seedier streets or go to massage parlors and brothels for a night of paid intimacy. All Pinoys have to do is text a number to get a girl delivered straight to their motel room!

"PINOY Big BLAHther"

Home improvements—and some damages

ILLUSTRATION: ALBERT G. RODRIGUEZ

Streamlined furniture pieces and "cleaner," tone-on-tone colors, in line with keeping the outdoors in various shades of green—from lime to olive, sage to celadon—and earth were all the rage. Wenge finally bowed out to lighter shades of wood such as walnut and oak.

It will take some time before Filipinos totally embrace minimalism, says Cynthia Almario of Atelier Almario, but a growing number are becoming more open to it.

The Asian Modern, which continues to reign supreme. Unlike pure, unadulterated Orientalia, the look combines streamlined Italian furniture pieces with traditional or stylized Asian accents such as lamps, lanterns, vases and plates.

Home makers investing in expensive, one-of-a-kind sculptural furniture pieces by the likes of Kenneth Cobunpue. The Filipino designer's works have a decidedly Milanese flavor, which have become more interesting because of their use of materials indigenous to the Philippines.

The retro look, which also made a splash last year. A number of homeowners went for black-and-white accessories with graphic prints. Accents in the form of zebra and leopard prints were also big.

Badly proportioned furniture in the form of wide but squat pieces inspired by bigger originals from the United States. While these humongous showcases may work in spacious homes in California and Florida, their poorly scaled-down versions simply stick like a sore thumb in cramped condo units in Manila.

Overly ornate "Dubai-inspired" furniture pieces painted in metallic shades and wrapped in loud Versace-like prints. These simply have no place in a supposedly chic home.

Food scene's tasty treats

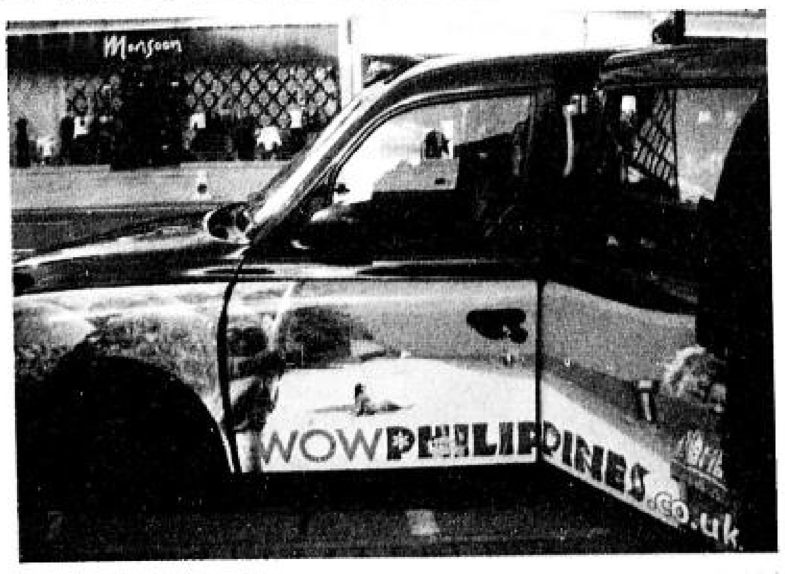
CELEBRATING World Chefs Day. Fernando Aracama, Quito Jose, Reggie Aspiras, Luis Miguel Marques Caseiro, J Gamboa and Cyrille Soenen.

World Chefs Day. Last Oct. 20 saw the Philippines observing the delicious day for the second year, and there was a lavish spread at Humphrey Navarro's 45, which hosted the celebration. It left the satiated people asking for more. Like Christmas, can't World Chefs Day be marked every day?

Cookbooks. 2005 saw food publishing boiling merrily as ever. Notable books were Erlinda Panlilio and Felice Sta. Maria's "Slow Food," Nancy Lumen and Reynaldo Alejandro's "The Adobo Book," Vicente Roman and Reynaldo Alejandro's "Wow! Ang Sarap!: The Best of Philippine Regional Cuisine." Other notable books: "Philippine Cuisine: Home-Cooked Recipes Wherever You May Be," by Myrna D. Segismundo; "Cultural Foods Around the World," by Virginia Serraon-Claudio, Lourdes Serraon-Joves and Adela Jamorabo-Ruiz; "Filipino Cooking and Entertaining Here and Abroad," by Eleanor R. Laquian; "Kitchen Rescue: Excerpts from the Philippine Daily Inquirer and Then Some...," by Reggie Aspiras; "Cooking with Coconut," by Annie Pascual Guerrero; and "Smart Carbs: Good-Carbohydrate Recipes for Every Lifestyle," by Tina Juan, Bambi Gobio and Luchi Callanta.

New *palengke* concept. Farmer's Market in Araneta Center in Cubao now features stainless pushcarts for shoppers looking for fresh seafood, meat and vegetables. The stalls have been classified by name and category. Directional signs have also been installed to make it easier for customers to locate stores.

Travel ups and downs



INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

A LONDON taxicab sporting a "Wow Philippines" exterior (above); and the still-mothballed NAIA 3 Terminal (right)—the Janus faces of Philippine tourism in 2005

Tiger Airways and Jetstar's bargain-basement rates for Asian trips, most notably Hong Kong and Singapore, allowed many to travel overseas without busting their wallets. That one had first to travel to Clark, then ride on a plane without the usual inflight amenities, was a minor inconvenience.

This year, going to Singapore was markedly cheaper than going to Boracay, Bohol, Palawan and many other so-called prime destinations in the country. Paging the Department of Tourism!

RP is now the No. 1 honeymoon destination among Korean couples, Chinese tourists are flocking to the Philippines and pictures of the country's attractions are adorning taxicabs in London. DOT's focused marketing efforts have been reaping good results.

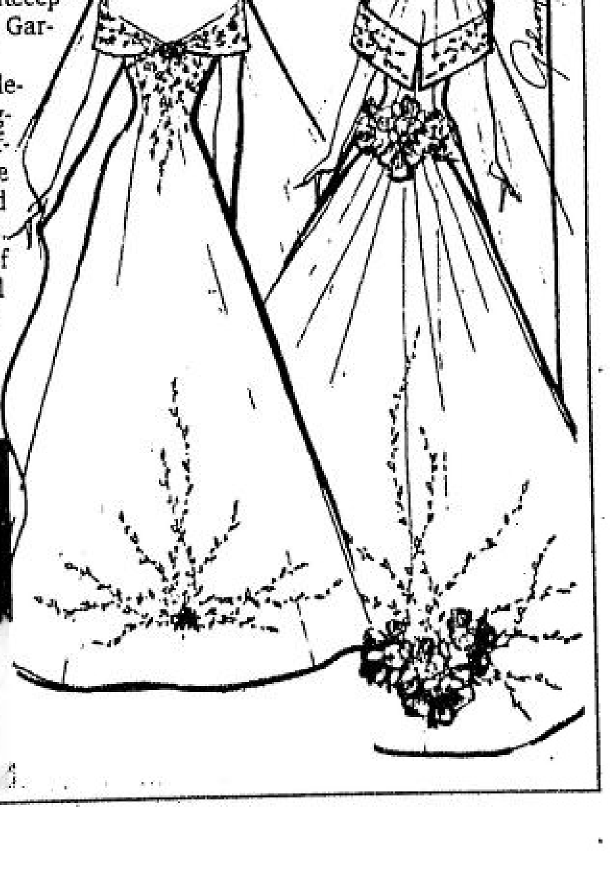
No amount of hype and promotion, however, can undo the sight of a congested, dilapidated and dirty NAIA—the first sight tourists get upon arriving on Philippine soil. NAIA 3's opening has been announced several times, yet it still sits mothballed, deserted. Open it, folks.

Milestones

TULIPAT-SANTOS

Ricky T. Tulipat, son of **Roque (deceased)** and **Elizabeth Tulipat**, will wed INQUIRER reporter **Tina G. Santos**, daughter of **Renato** and **Milagros Santos**, on Jan. 5, at St. Pancratius Chapel (Paco Park), Manila. Reception will follow at the Old Swiss Inn, Garden Plaza Hotel and Suites.

Gideon Sy of Drezzee Boutique designed the bride's gown using egg-shell-white duchess satin with an off-shoulder portrait collar. The A-line bodice has a detachable train cinched with silk roses and horsehair ribbons. It is accentuated with a cascading leaf pattern and encrusted with floral Swarovski crystals, cut glass and sequins. A French tulle veil and head-piece made of crystals and beads complete the ensemble.



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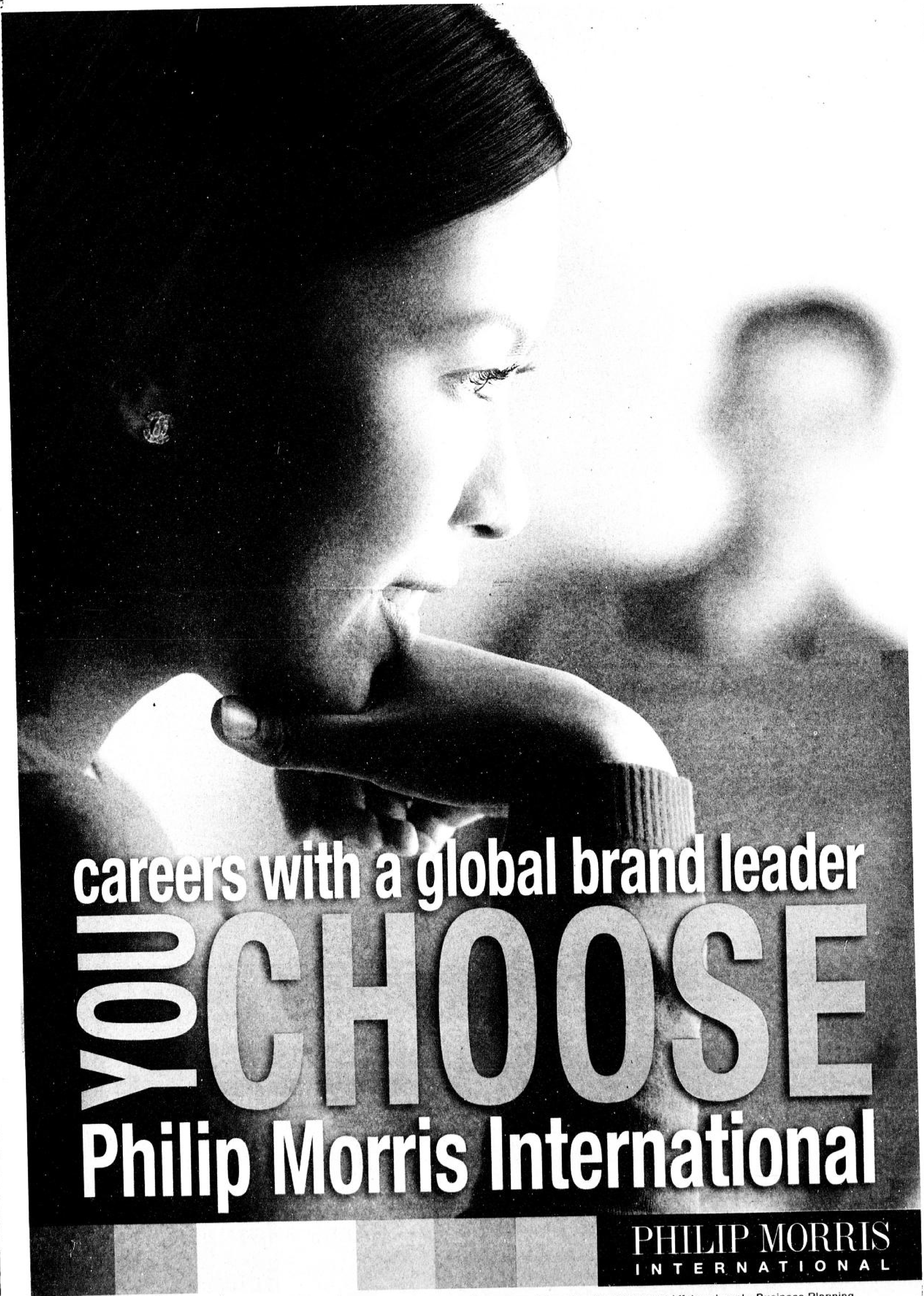
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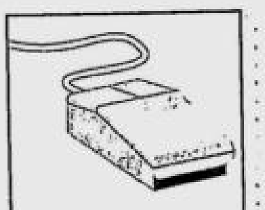

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- with excellent interpersonal and communication skills
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- must be computer literate

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- must be computer literate

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- Knowledgeable in AutoCADD application
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- proficient in drafting, designing and estimates

Visual Display Officer

- male/female
- Graduate of Fine Arts or any 4 year related course
- with at least 1 year related experience in retail, design or fashion is preferred
- current knowledge of RTW, Men's and Home Fashions is a plus
- strong organization, planning, and prioritizing skills
- flexible to be scheduled in support or retail hours

Training Officer/Trainer

The ideal candidate will be primarily responsible for the development of training programs and the carry out of approved ones with the end view of providing assistance in the skills and attitude enhancement of employees.

- male/female
- not over 32 years old
- graduate of Education, Psychology, Behavioral Science or any 4-year business course
- with 2 years related work experience
- knowledgeable in conducting training needs analysis, designing, implementing and evaluating of training programs and activities related to behavior and skill modification of employees

Nurse

The successful candidate will be responsible for assisting the Company Physician in providing medical services in the assigned branch.

- female
- not over 32 years old
- must be a Registered Nurse
- with 2 years experience in industrial or hospital setup
- able to establish rapport and deal with all levels of the organization
- willing to work on shift schedules or extended hours

IT Associate

- male
- not over 28 years old
- graduate of Computer Science/Engineering
- with 1 to 2 years experience in repair, trouble shooting and maintenance of cash registers

Office Assistant

(Human Resources • Accounting • Treasury • Customer Service)

- female
- not over 25 years old
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If you believe you are the ideal candidate, you may apply personally from Monday to Friday 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.
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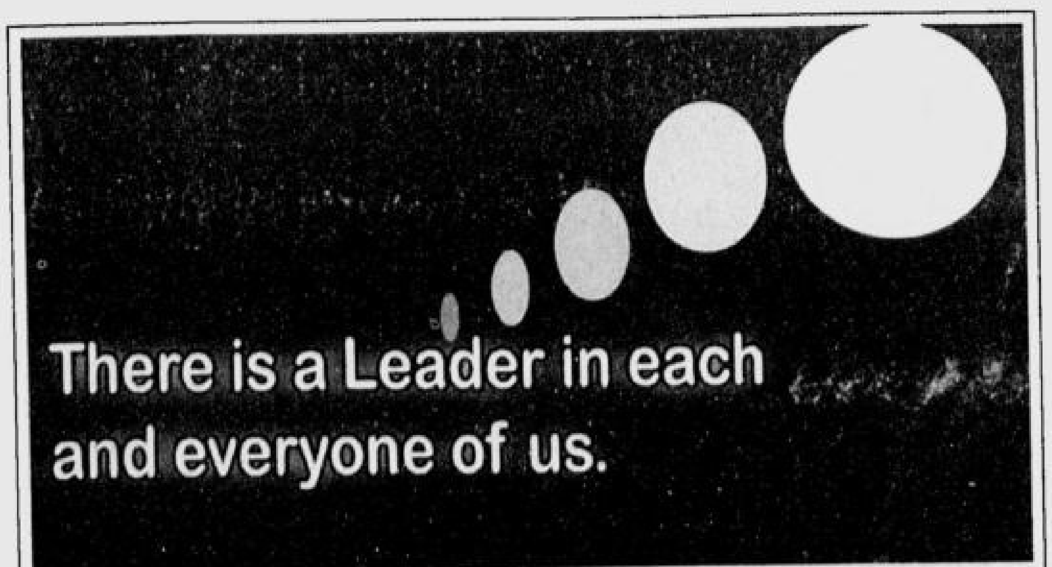
- Prepare and conduct logistical support to trainers
- Work independently to create, manage and implement programs to generate revenues for the training programs
- Coordinate with partners to prepare training schedules that best fit the needs of clients

Requirements:

- Bachelor's degree in any field;
- Excellent selling and marketing skills for training programs
- Excellent background in client service and project management
- Experience in selling Training/Organizational Development programs to companies a must;
- Highly analytical and detail-oriented;
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills.
- Proficient in MS Word and PowerPoint

Please submit your CV by email to egarcia@trainingworks.com.ph on or before 18 January 2006. Only shortlisted candidates will be notified.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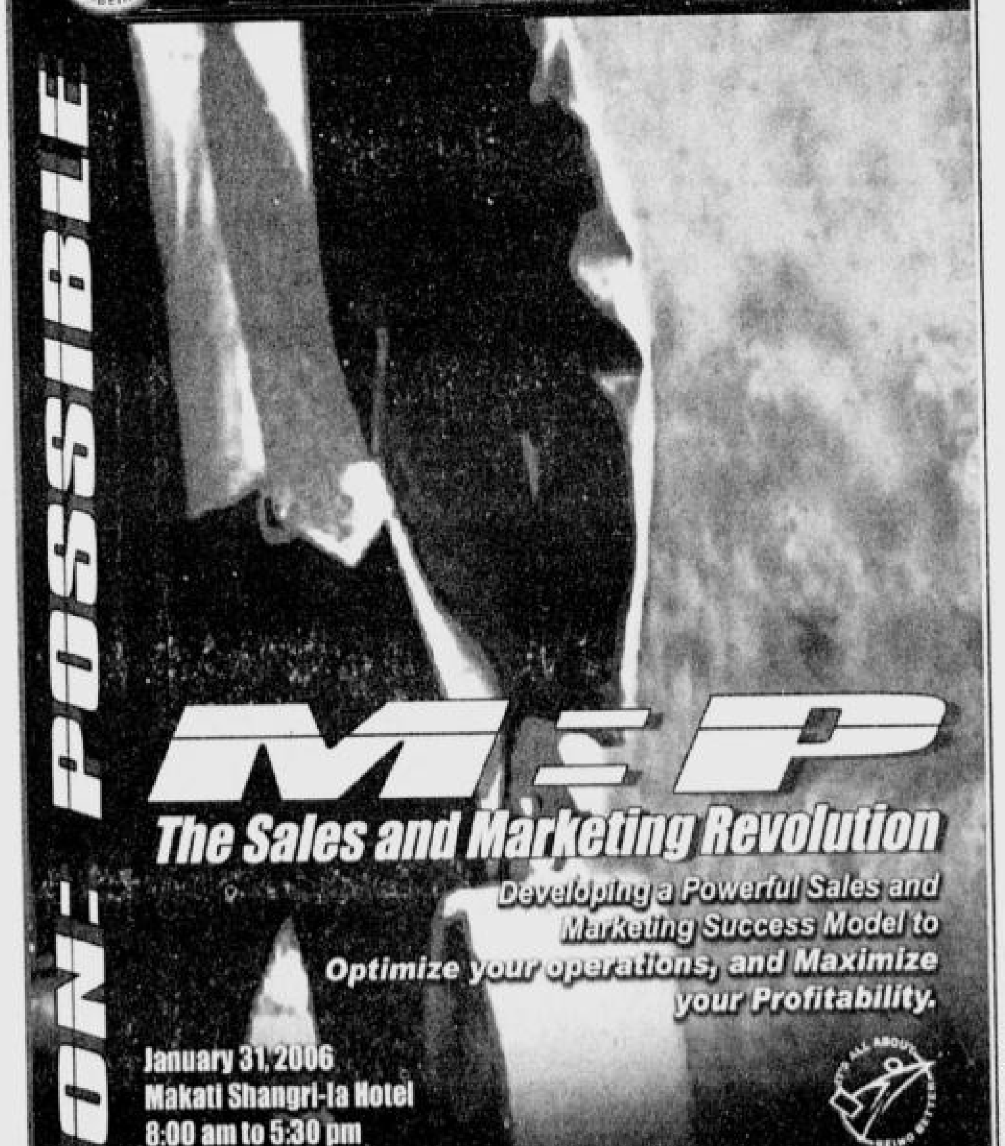

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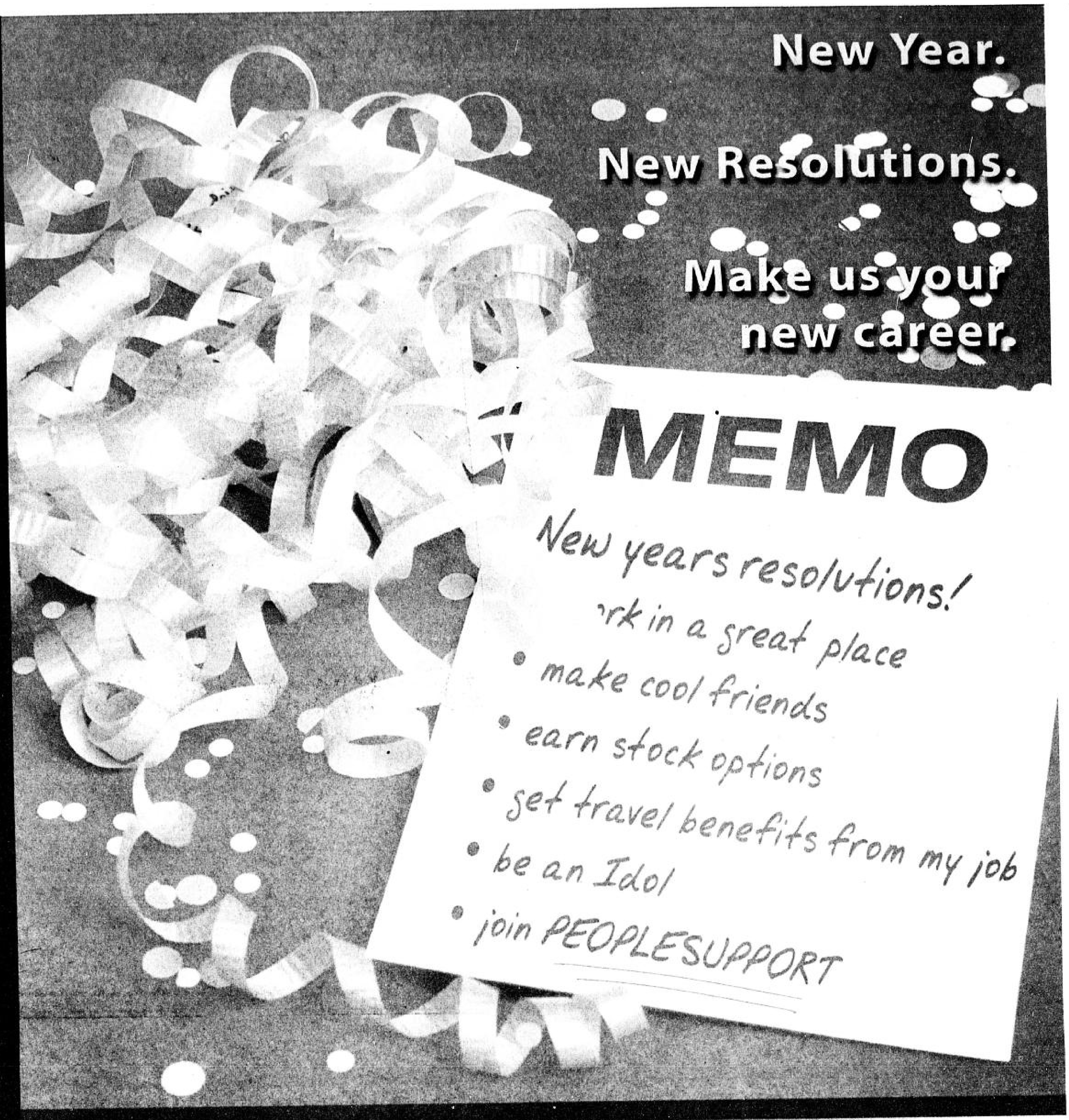

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INQUIRER

JOB Market

SUNDAY, JANUARY 1, 2006
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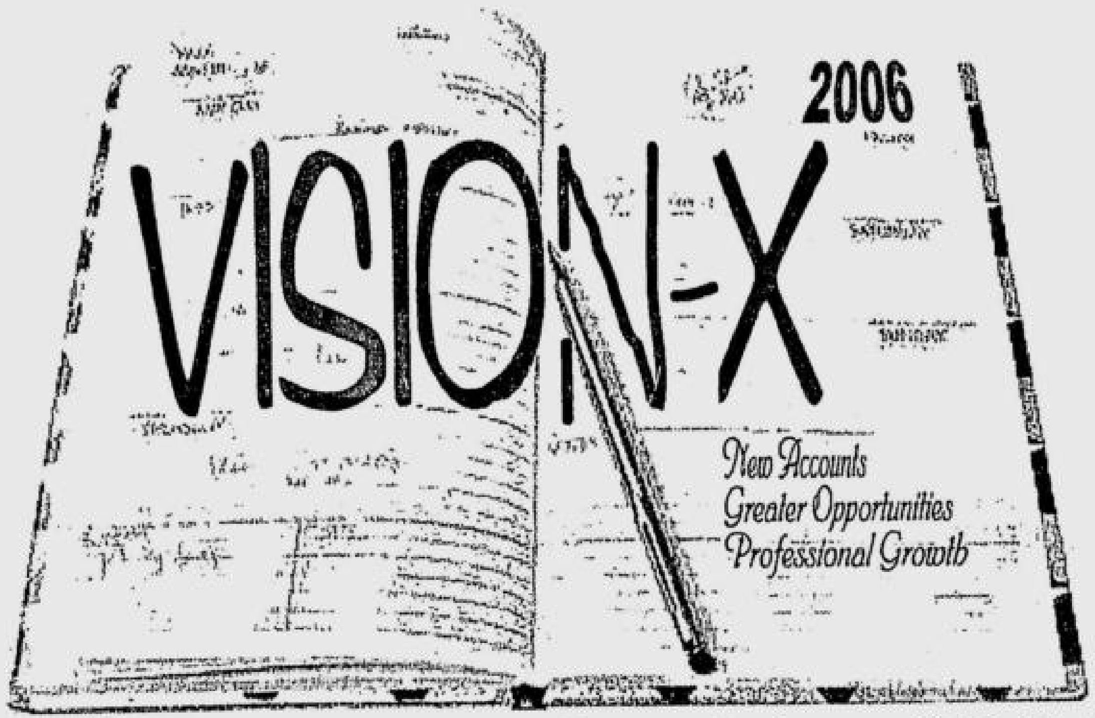

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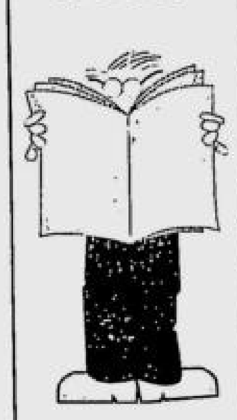

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JOB Market

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THIRD SECTION OF JOBMARKET PEOPLE AT WORK ON PAGES 2 & 3

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Blended learning: the newest way to effectively learn

By Lianne A. Asuncion

PEOPLE AT WORK Pulse

GALILEO GALILEI ONCE SAID, "You cannot teach a man anything; you can only help him find it within himself." There's a lot of truth to that statement, which leads us to ask how one can help someone find knowledge within himself.

In the context of work in the Philippines, the most common way of imparting and acquiring knowledge is through attending workshops, seminars and conferences. But do these training methods actually work? Adult learning principles state that different people learn in different ways. Some people learn better by experiencing, some by watching, while others use reasoning and experimentation. This diversity in learning styles has put traditional training methods in the spotlight, raising the question of whether these workshops, seminars, and conferences actually aid employee development, or whether there is a preference for other training methods. That is where the concept of "blended learning" comes in.

Emerging practice

Blended learning is an emerging practice in the field of employee development in the Philippines. Quite a few companies—mostly those in the IT and telecommunications industries—have been using this type of training program in order to meet their learning objectives in the most efficient way possible. Imagine walking into your favorite coffee shop and picking out your drink from a wide array of mixes. More often than not, you end up enjoying every sip.

Blended learning shares the same concept. It takes into consideration the employee's learning styles and preferred methods of instruction, thus maximizing the employee's capacity to take in and apply the acquired knowledge and information. By doing so, there is that opportunity to keep the employee empowered and engaged throughout the whole learning process, which is a key factor to any training's success. As such, this month's People at Work Pulse attempted to look more into blended learning—the available ingredients and how to mix them.

Learning mix

ILLUSTRATION BY ANTHONY MISTADES

Thirty-four readers coming from various industries responded. Among them, around 71 percent were females and 29 percent were males, with ages ranging from 22 to 48 years old. Employees from the private sector made up 75 percent of the total respondents, 17 percent from the government, and 8 percent from the academe and nongovernment organizations.

All the respondents indicated that their respective organizations do provide them with a variety of learning methodologies for employee development. Out of all the respondents, 83 percent mentioned that they undergo trainings and workshops, 71 percent attend conferences and seminars, and 60 percent go through on-the-job training. These are the top three interventions employed by organizations at present.

This data suggests that formal approaches to training are still the most predominant in organizations in the Philippines. Nevertheless, other more unconventional methods are slowly gaining popularity with more than a few organizations attempting to break free from tradition in order to provide more integrated approaches to learning. Such less common, but equally important methods include coaching/mentoring

BLENDED/P.3★★★

Corporate social responsibility

PEOPLE AT WORK Pulse

PEOPLE AT WORK AND the Ateneo Center for Organization Research and Development (CORD) partner to listen to the heartbeats of working people through this People at Work Pulse. The results of this poll will be published the following month. To quicken your response rates, Philippine Daily Inquirer and Ateneo CORD will be giving gift packages to two respondents to be drawn from those who replied for the month. Winners from last month's survey are **Raul P. Garcellano** and **Lauro D. Santiago**. (Please contact Philippine Daily Inquirer at 897-8808 local 554 to claim your prizes).

1. What is your idea of corporate social responsibility?
   a. Community development/ civic involvement
   b. Medical missions
   c. Outreach programs
   d. Foundations
   e. Scholarships
   f. Charities
   g.Others: ____________________

2. How often does your organization run these projects?
   a. Never
   b. Once a year
   c. Twice a year
   d. Quarterly
   e. Once and only during a special occasion
   f. More than four times a year

3. Do you get involved/ volunteer yourself in these projects?
   a. Yes
   b. Not yet, but I would like to be involved in these projects.
   c. Not applicable

4. Do you think that all companies should have these programs?
   a. Yes
   b. No

5. How important is corporate social responsibility in your selection of potential employers?
   a. I prefer companies that have these programs
   b. I prefer that companies do not have these programs.
   c. It does not matter whether my potential employer have these programs or not.

6. What is the impact of a Corporate Social Responsibility Program?
   a. It is not important.
   b. Good public relations (PR) for the company.
   c. Allows employees to bond.
   d. Encourages social responsibility.

Name: ____________________
Gender: __________ Age: ______ Status: __________
Nature of the Job: __________ Position: __________
Company name: ____________________
Industry: __________ No. of years working: ______
Tel/ Mobile/E-mail: ____________________

Mail your answers to People at Work Pulse, Ateneo Center for Organization Research and Development, 2nd flr. Hoffner Building, Social Development Complex, Ateneo de Manila University, Loyola Heights Quezon City. Or fax this form to (632) 426-6065, or e-mail your answers to ateneocord@admu.edu.ph or text to (0920) 831-9522. Write: topic 1.(answer), 2. (answer), etc. name, gender, age, status, position, address, contract numbers or e-mail.

How do you give a great presentation?

DEAR WW: I RECENTLY READ that giving a presentation is at the top of the list of people's fears. Well it is for me and I've got to give one in a couple of weeks. Help!

Speechless

WORKING WOUNDED
Bob Rosner

Whenever I think about giving a presentation I think of the German man who tried to provoke his neighbor's dog so he could report the animal for disturbing the peace. How would he do this? He played a tape of a barking dog to provoke the not barking dog, according to German police.

That man got busted for his provocative actions. However, there is one time where it almost always does pay to be provocative; when you are giving a speech. I've listed a series of ways to provoke your audience right from the start of you talk. For more, check out Mike Caruso's website http://EdisonHouse.com.

Do you offer your credentials in the first five minutes? Connect with people on a human level by using an "incidental credential." For example, you can say "When I was speaking in London last week I learned ..." or "A CEO raised a great question in a speech I did last week in LA..." You establish that you are as speaker who gets around and who talks to the right people, without appearing too egomaniacal.

Do you establish positive expectations in the first five minutes? Everyone has sat through enough boring speeches, and speakers, to have a bad attitude about speakers in general. One way that you can overcome this skepticism is to clearly tell them what they'll learn during your talk. And the more specific you make it to the interests, needs and concerns of the audience you are talking to—the better. This will require that you speak to a number of audience members in advance, a small price to pay to earn your trip to the podium.

Do you make them smile in the first five minutes? I'm not saying that everyone should be a comedian, but simply that given the option to laugh or not to laugh, most of us would vote for the former. You can stop short of seeking a belly laugh, just putting a smile on people's faces will be appreciated by your audience.

Do you ask them to do something in the first five minutes? The simple act of answering a question, doing an activity or writing something down sets an important precedent; it primes the pump for actions to follow. So do what you can to get your audience active and involved right from the very start.

Do you teach them something in the first five minutes? When a speaker tells me something I didn't know right from the start he or she often will maintain my interest through their entire speech. Why? Because I don't want to miss the next great fact or story that they may have in their bag of tricks.

Follow these tips and your next presentation won't be a dog.

(Mr. Rosner, an internationally syndicated columnist, author and speaker, is based in Seattle, Washington, USA. E-mail him at bob@workingwounded.com.)

A second option for admin supervisor who wants to shift to HR work
p.3★★★

REFLECTIONS FOR THE WORKING SOUL

Keeping our mouth shut

By Teresa R. Tunay, OCDS

CAN YOU GUESS WHICH PART OF THE HUMAN BODY IS the hardest to tame? Behavioral experts say it is the tongue. The workplace is a classic example of an environment where the tongue can wreak havoc in more ways than one can imagine. So many careers have been shattered, workers physically incapacitated, countless friendships or associations damaged, anomalies forged and companies annihilated—on account of one wild tongue. This is a case where a golden lesson in today's Gospel may be most relevant. Just one line about silence says a lot: "And Mary kept all these things, reflecting on them in her heart." Whatever she heard, she kept to herself. Was she not excited to hear what the shepherds were saying? But whatever she felt then, only God knew, because Mary pondered it all in her heart.

From Mary's example we learn about the virtue of keeping our mouth shut—something very useful in the workplace. We need not pass on every piece of information—whether valid or tittle-tattle—we receive. It's not always good to be the first to announce things, nor is it desirable to be known at work as the guy who can't keep a secret. Because a tongue at rest conserves our energy, it naturally makes us more focused on our work—it is an active and productive silence so needed in the workplace.

Our silence would lead us to peace, as it did with Mary whom God rewarded with effective serenity. How does this work? Reflecting on things in our heart signals surrender—surrender to the wisdom of a Power much greater than ourselves. Being thus united with that Power, we open our being to its influence, and our trust is rewarded with the wisdom of silence that shields us and our neighbors from harm and adversity. (*E-mail the author at* teresa_de_manila@yahoo.com)

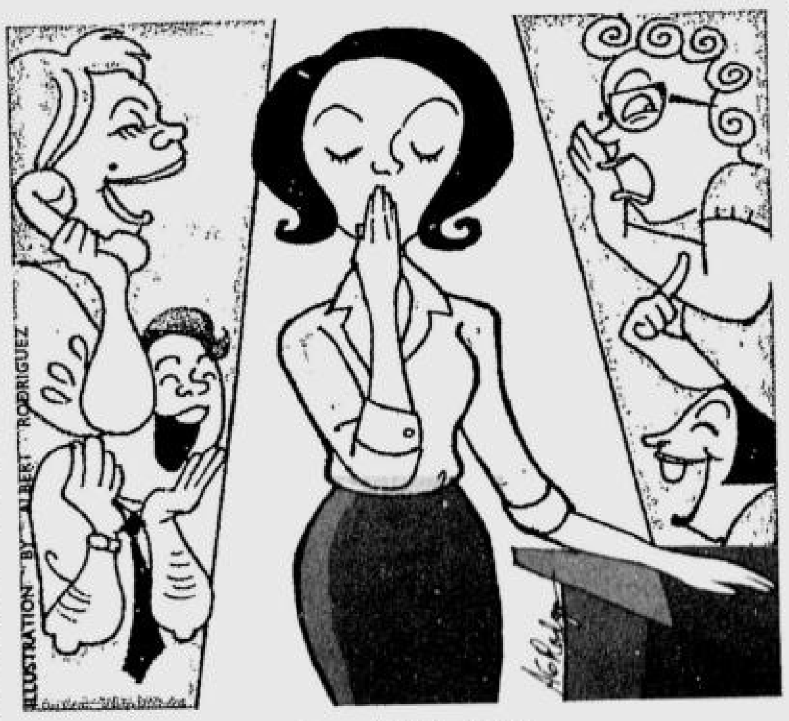
ILLUSTRATION BY ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

Gospel. Lk 2: 16-21
And Mary kept all these things, reflecting on them in her heart.

Men and Women of the Year

By Bishop Precioso D. Cantillas, SDB, DD

AS THE YEAR COMES TO AN END AND A NEW YEAR IS welcomed with great hope, some personalities are presented to the public as "Men of the Year" or "Women of the Year." The organizers of this presentation seem to pick individuals who have accomplished some important works for humanity, society or the world—deeds which have attracted the attention of the great majority or have gained widespread publicity through the media. Those whose works are known only to one's self and to God will most likely not earn the distinctive title. However, I believe that the millions of simple, hard-working and dedicated laborers and workers also deserve to be extolled as "Men and Women of the Year," and perhaps, of all times.

The millions of unskilled, semi-skilled and skilled laborers are essential to the running of the whole system of trade, commerce, industry and everything that makes the world go round. These kinds of workers—the blue collar workers—hardly get the recognition and the proper appreciation of the contribution they make to the upkeep of the whole society. They even sometimes suffer injustice and exploitation from those in power. They certainly deserve to be given more attention by the government and perhaps even by the media.

As the believers hail Mary, the Mother of God, who worked in silence "keeping and reflecting things in her heart," we want to assure these silent workers that we hold them in high esteem, and that they, too, are great, in the eyes of God. (*E-mail the author at* mfvg@skyinet.net)

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GLOBAL CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT

A second option for admin supervisor who wants to shift to HR work

(Continued from Dec. 11, 2005)

ASK YOUR CAREER COUNSELOR
Josie O. Santamaria

THE SECOND SUB-OPTION is to look for a job in another unit in your company that you enjoy and then ask the owners to transfer you to it, without loss of status, salary and benefits. Never mind if it is not in HR or in the field of psychology. The important thing is that you like and enjoy what you do. Being in a small company, you can even create your own job description with tasks that respond to critical needs that are not being currently met, and convince the owners to put you in it.

The second option for you is to apply for a job outside your company. Remove your mindset that, at your age, you cannot find a better job along the line of your interest. If it is in HR, what particular function in HR are you interested in? Recruitment? Training? Compensation and benefits? Salary administration? Employee relations? Or other areas in HR? Which function do you now have competencies in? What transferable skills do you have that you can highlight in your resumé?

When you want to start a new career, one strategy is to accept a lower-level rank, learn as much as you can and then work yourself up. Another strategy is to take up special courses or enroll in a formal course in your field of interest.

Update your resumé. Look for and read articles on effective resumé writing in the internet or from books. I also wrote a series of articles on writing effective resumés, which were published in the People at Work Section of the Philippine Daily Inquirer in October 2004 and which New Day Publishers published in my book. "Managing Your Career To The Top."

Then get information on companies or organizations you can apply to which need people for the job you want. Sources of information include the following:

- Your network of friends, family, and relatives. Let them know that you are job hunting and that you can provide them with your resumé. Keep tab of the people to whom you have given your resumé and follow up with them.
- Advertisements of companies for existing vacant positions. For example, the Sunday Philippine Inquirer has the Job Market section, which lists and describes many vacant positions. Ads are only the tip of the iceberg. There are more job vacancies that are not advertised as people resign to join other companies or to go abroad.
- Job fairs sponsored in big shopping malls or by the Public Employment Service Office (PESO) in city governments.

ILLUSTRATION BY ANTHONY MISTADES

Others

I notice that there are companies that do not specify required age range. If a company has a vacancy in your desired job but specifies an age range, you can emphasize your skills and your mental and emotional maturity to compensate for your age.

Do not resign from your job until you have found the right one. Meanwhile, be productive and efficient in your current position. When you resign, you leave behind your documented systems to guide your successor. This will please your current employers. God bless you.

(Ms Santamaria has a Ph.D in psychology and is a practicing psychologist, counselor, management consultant, executive coach and mentor. Her company, Career Systems, Inc. which she and her husband Jorge manage with daughter Desiree S. Urbi, specializes in career development, leadership and management development programs, and outplacement counseling services, as well as provide consulting services in human resources development and organization development. Send feedback to carsys@careersystems.com.ph.*)*

Blended learning: the newest way to effectively learn

From page 2★★★

(57 percent), learning communities (37 percent), workbooks and readings (29 percent), work teams and role modeling (23 percent), virtual education such as e-learning classes and online communities (14 percent), and performance support or help desks (14 percent). Examples of performance support include job aids, knowledge databases, and documentations.

Preferred modes

Given this assortment of learning methodologies, the tendency to take them for granted comes so easy. It becomes almost stress-free to just pick a program and run it the way the organization sees fit. However, no matter how suited it is to the organization's objectives, the success of the program becomes at risk if it does not facilitate the employees' education. People learn in different ways. Some people prefer the classroom setting, others learn better in the field, yet there are also those who are more engaged working side-by-side with a mentor.

We asked readers what activities facilitated their learning, and the survey results indicated that the top three activities are training and workshops (77 percent), conferences and seminars (51 percent), and coaching and mentoring (46 percent). Looking at the data, there seems to be an apparent preference for live face-to-face interaction. However, considering that 85 percent of the respondents are HR practitioners and trainers, this lends support to the majority's response that the popularity of these activities is due mostly to its relevance or value to the employee's current work (74 percent).

No fixed recipe

Taking in all these so-called ingredients—available methods and helpful features—how then do we blend? There is no fixed recipe for blends, organizations make use of what they have and utilize them in the way they deem fit. In our survey, respondents said that in blending, they take into consideration the delivery (57 percent), convenience (37 percent), cost (23 percent), and access to technology (14 percent). They can create a program that combines coaching with online communities (forums, live chat); or they can also put together a workshop supplemented with knowledge databases. The bottom line is, in order to get the right mix, exploration of employee capability and learning style is necessary, as well as knowledge of organization structure and its available resources.

Blended learning keeps the employee engaged because it's a continuous process. Aside from being able to reach the learner at a more personal level, there is also the opportunity to extend that reach to more learners, given the variety of training methods available. Maybe it's time to rethink the one-size-fits-all mentality and be more creative. Matching how a learner wants to learn with what learning program to offer will most likely lead to improved learning effectiveness.

On the part of the learner, it is also important to know that no one will know what works best for you except you. Thus, it will be helpful to communicate to your boss or organization your own preferred modes of learning. But beyond that provided by organizations, it is also important to note that perhaps the most important factor in enabling employee development is the eagerness and drive of the learner. You can create your own blend if you only will it so.

(Ms Asuncion is a programs officer at Ateneo CORD and a graduate student in Industrial-Organizational Psychology at the Ateneo de Manila University. For more inquiries about this study, contact ateneocord@admu.edu.ph*)*

IBM

AS WE FLIP THRU THE CALENDAR PAGES OF THE YEAR THAT HAS COME TO PASS, WE ARE PROUD TO SAY THAT IT HAS BEEN A MAGNIFICENT YEAR FOR US.

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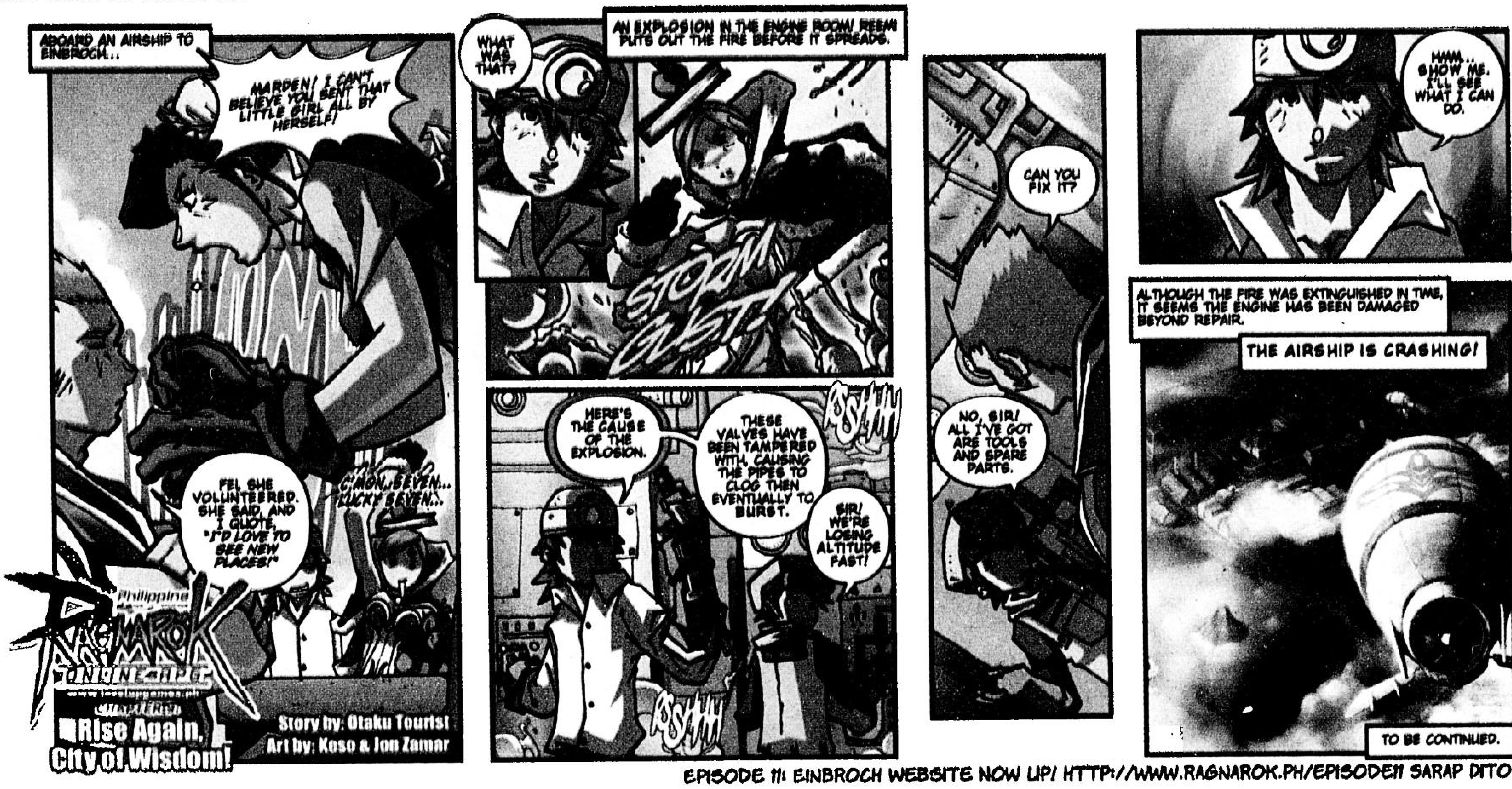
RAGNAROK

BY LEVEL UP GAMES


ABOARD AN AIRSHIP TO EINBROCH...
MARDEN! I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU SENT THAT LITTLE GIRL ALL BY HERSELF!
FEL SHE VOLUNTEERED. SHE SAID, AND I QUOTE, "I'D LOVE TO SEE NEW PLACES!"
C'MON..SEVEN... LUCKY SEVEN...
Philippine Ragnarok Online RPG
www.levelupgames.ph
Rise Again, City of Wisdom!
Story by: Otaku Tourist
Art by: Koso & Jon Zamar
WHAT WAS THAT?
AN EXPLOSION IN THE ENGINE ROOM! REEM PUTS OUT THE FIRE BEFORE IT SPREADS.
STORM GUST!
HERE'S THE CAUSE OF THE EXPLOSION.
THESE VALVES HAVE BEEN TAMPERED WITH, CAUSING THE PIPES TO CLOG THEN EVENTUALLY TO BURST.
PSSHHH
SIR! WE'RE LOSING ALTITUDE FAST!
PSSHHH
CAN YOU FIX IT?
NO, SIR! ALL I'VE GOT ARE TOOLS AND SPARE PARTS.
HMM... SHOW ME. I'LL SEE WHAT I CAN DO.
ALTHOUGH THE FIRE WAS EXTINGUISHED IN TIME, IT SEEMS THE ENGINE HAS BEEN DAMAGED BEYOND REPAIR.
THE AIRSHIP IS CRASHING!
TO BE CONTINUED.

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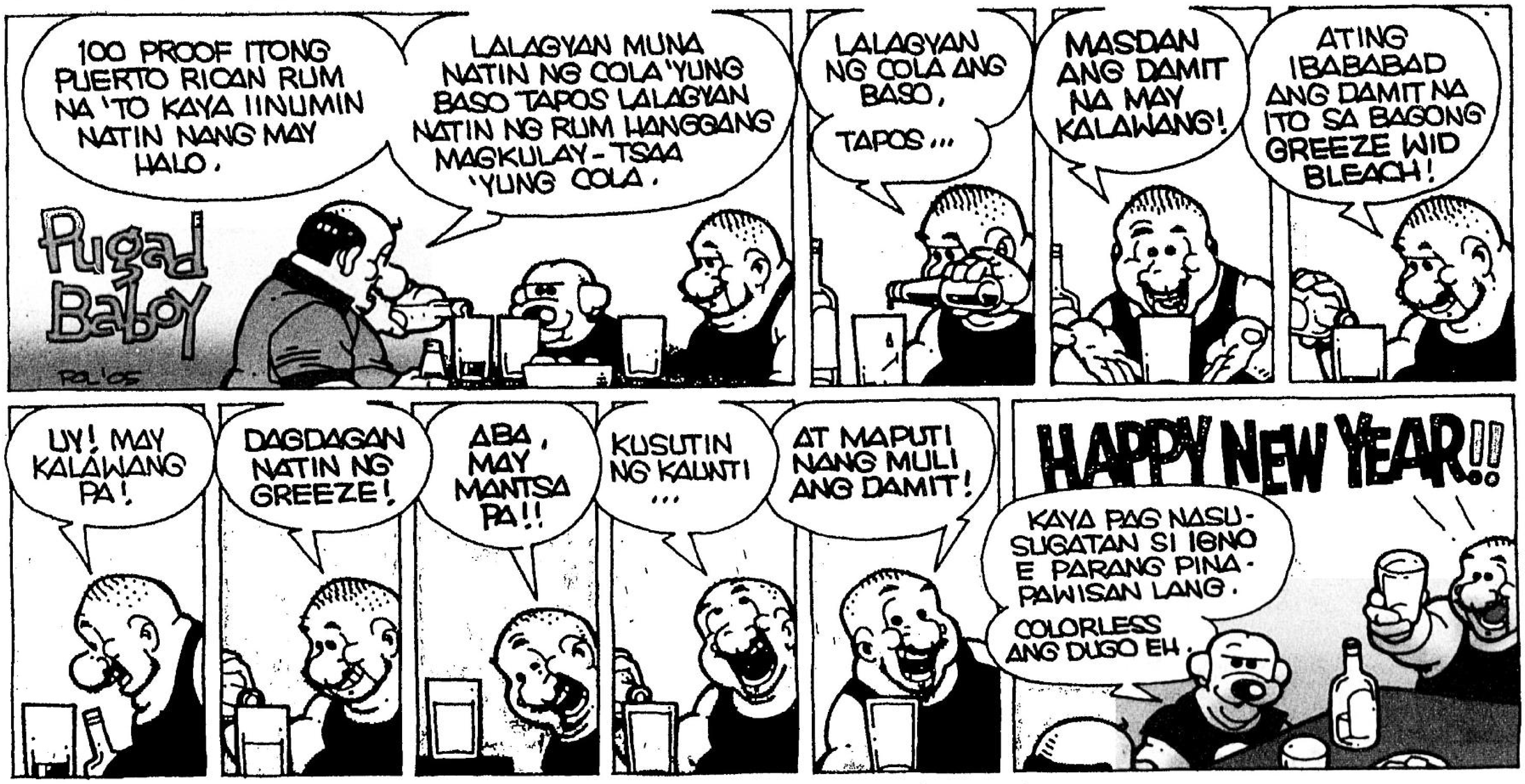
EPISODE 11: EINBROCH WEBSITE NOW UP! HTTP://WWW.RAGNAROK.PH/EPISODE11 SARAP DITO!

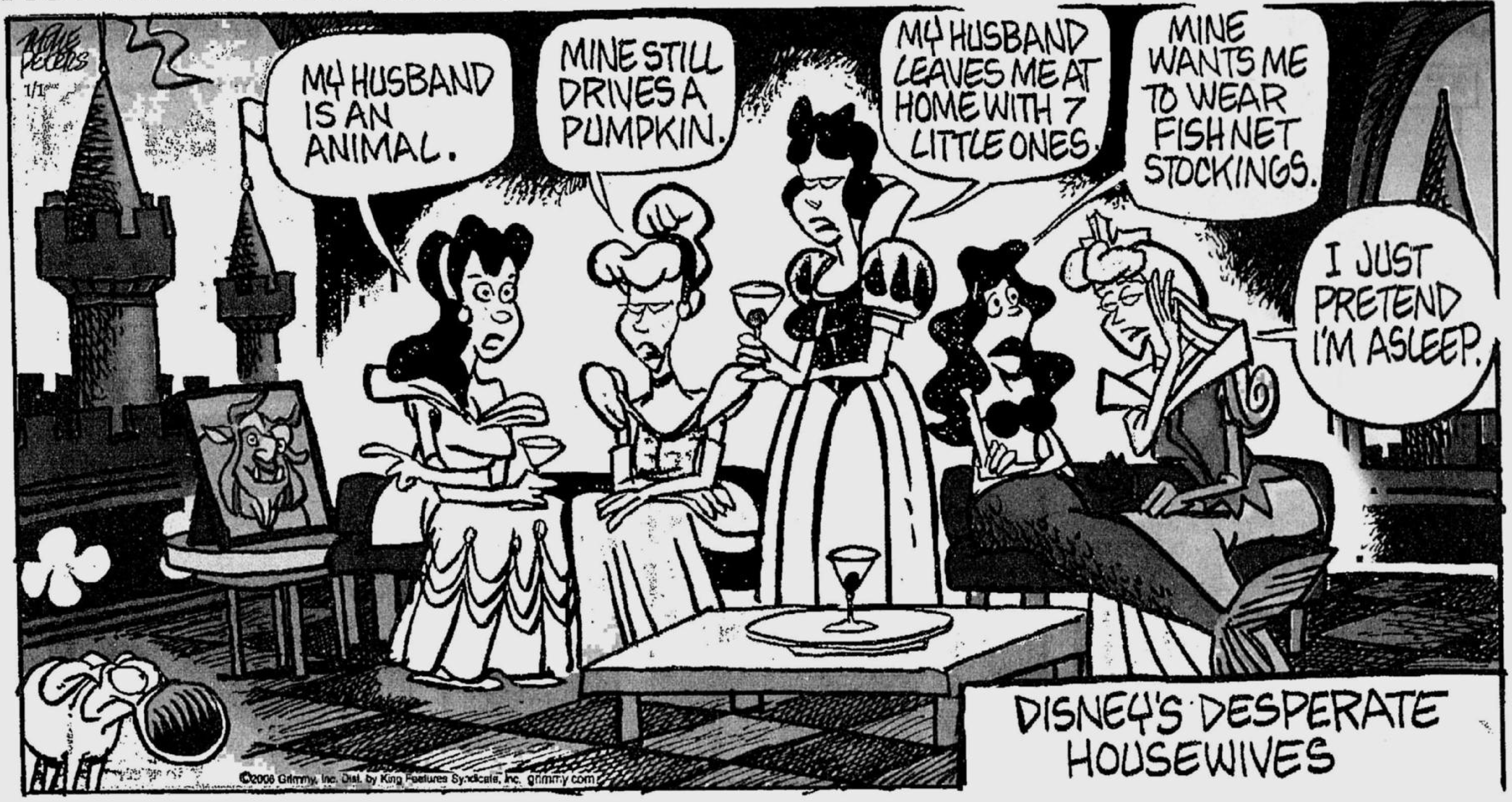
PUGAD BABOY

BY POL MEDINA JR.


100 PROOF ITONG PUERTO RICAN RUM NA 'TO KAYA IINUMIN NATIN NANG MAY HALO.
LALAGYAN MUNA NATIN NG COLA 'YUNG BASO TAPOS LALAGYAN NATIN NG RUM HANGGANG MAGKULAY-TSAA 'YUNG COLA.
Pugad Baboy
POL '05
LALAGYAN NG COLA ANG BASO,
TAPOS...
MASDAN ANG DAMIT NA MAY KALAWANG!
ATING IBABABAD ANG DAMIT NA ITO SA BAGONG GREEZE WID BLEACH!
UY! MAY KALAWANG PA!
DAGDAGAN NATIN NG GREEZE!
ABA, MAY MANTSA PA!!
KUSUTIN NG KAUNTI ...
AT MAPUTI NANG MULI ANG DAMIT!
HAPPY NEW YEAR!!
KAYA PAG NASUSUGATAN SI IGNO E PARANG PINAPAWISAN LANG.
COLORLESS ANG DUGO EH.

MOTHER GOOSE & GRIMM

BY MIKE PETERS


MIKE PETERS 1/1
MY HUSBAND IS AN ANIMAL.
MINE STILL DRIVES A PUMPKIN.
MY HUSBAND LEAVES ME AT HOME WITH 7 LITTLE ONES.
MINE WANTS ME TO WEAR FISH NET STOCKINGS.
I JUST PRETEND I'M ASLEEP.
DISNEY'S DESPERATE HOUSEWIVES

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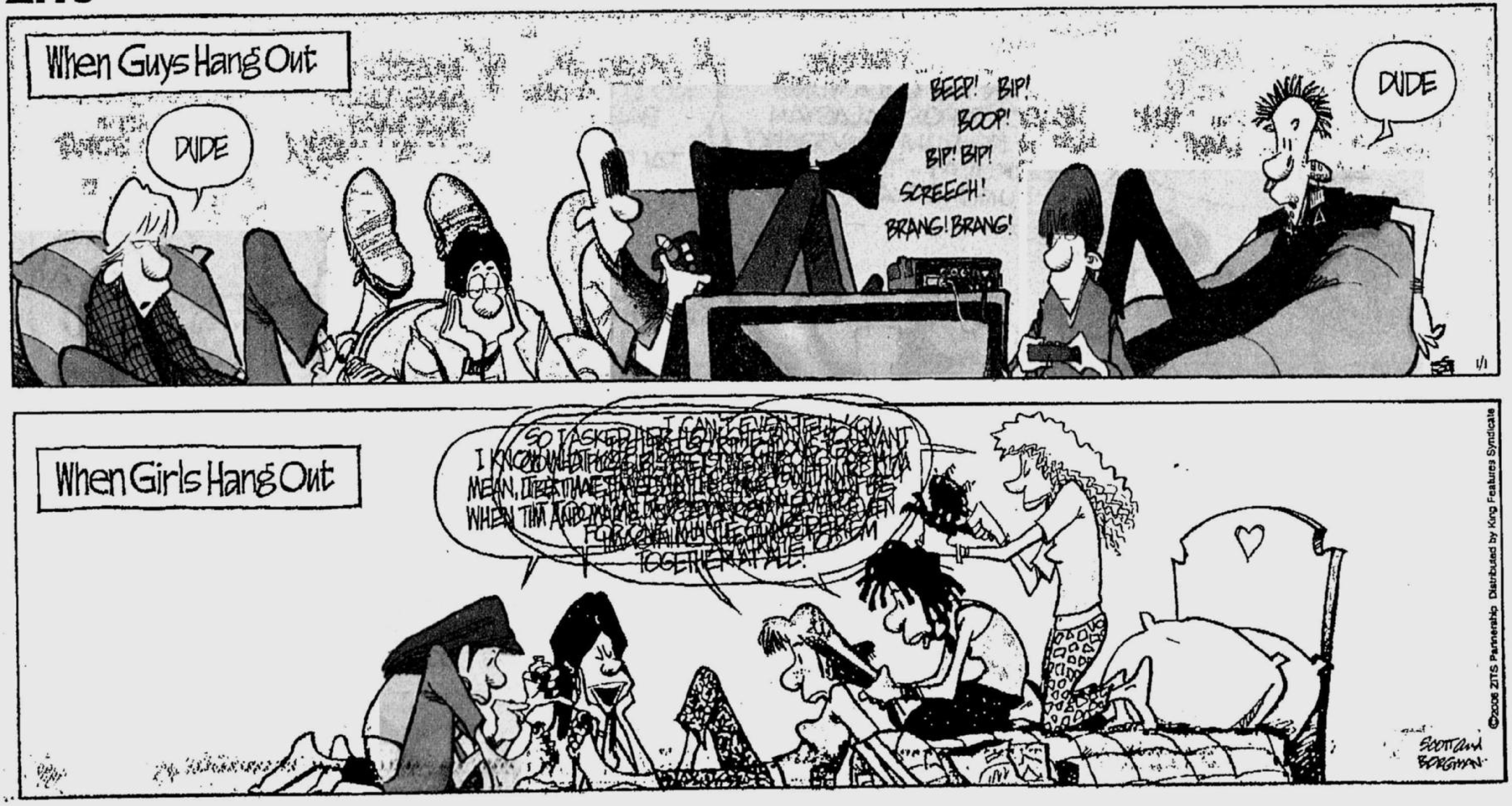
ZITS

BY JERRY SCOTT AND JIM BORGMAN


When Guys Hang Out
DUDE
BEEP! BIP! BOOP! BIP! BIP! SCREECH! BRANG! BRANG!
DUDE
1/1
When Girls Hang Out
I KN... MEAN, ... WHEN TIM ...
SO I ASKED HER ...
I CAN'T EVEN TELL YOU ... WANT
... TOGETHER AT ALL!
SCOTT and BORGMAN

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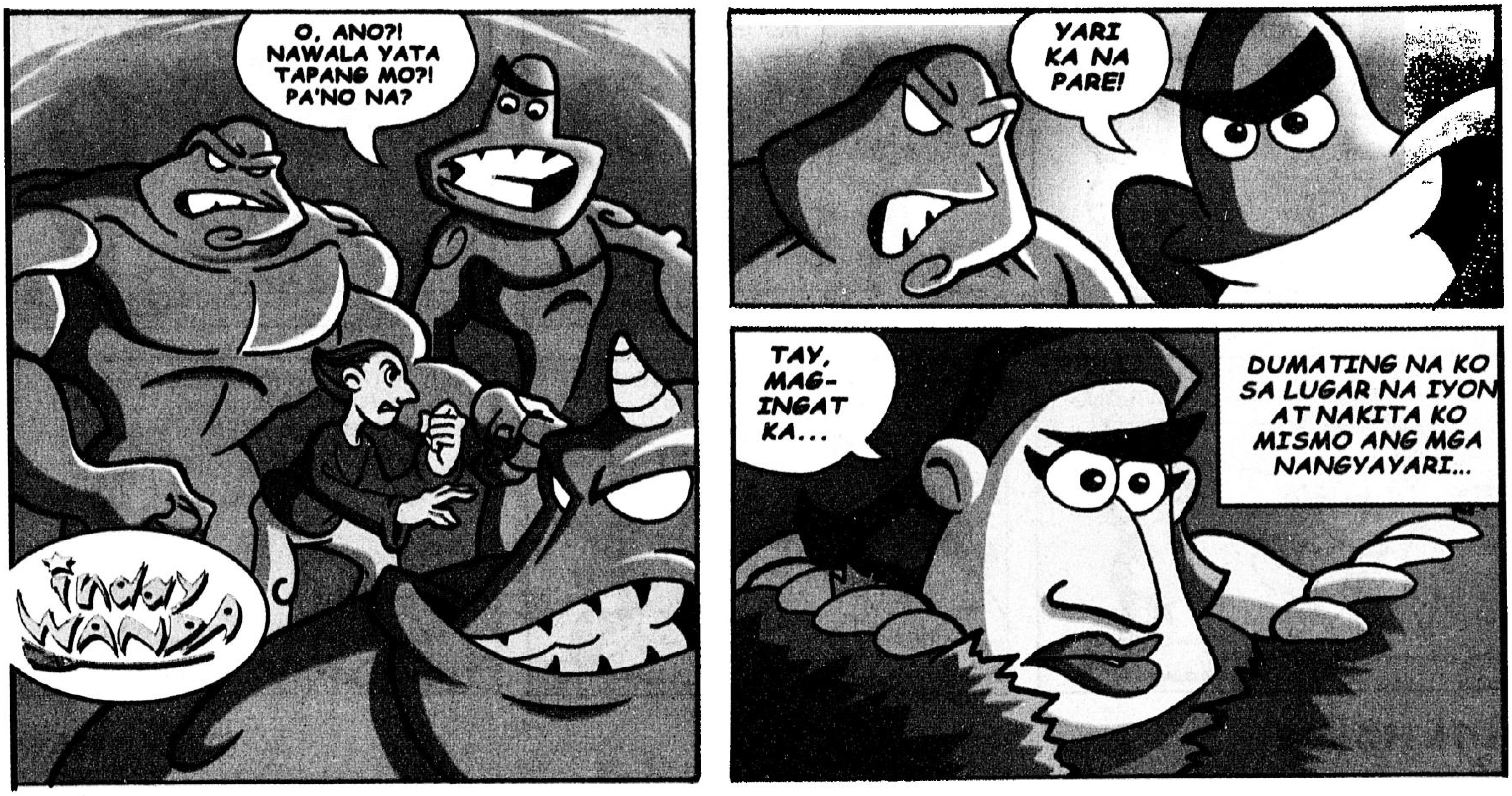
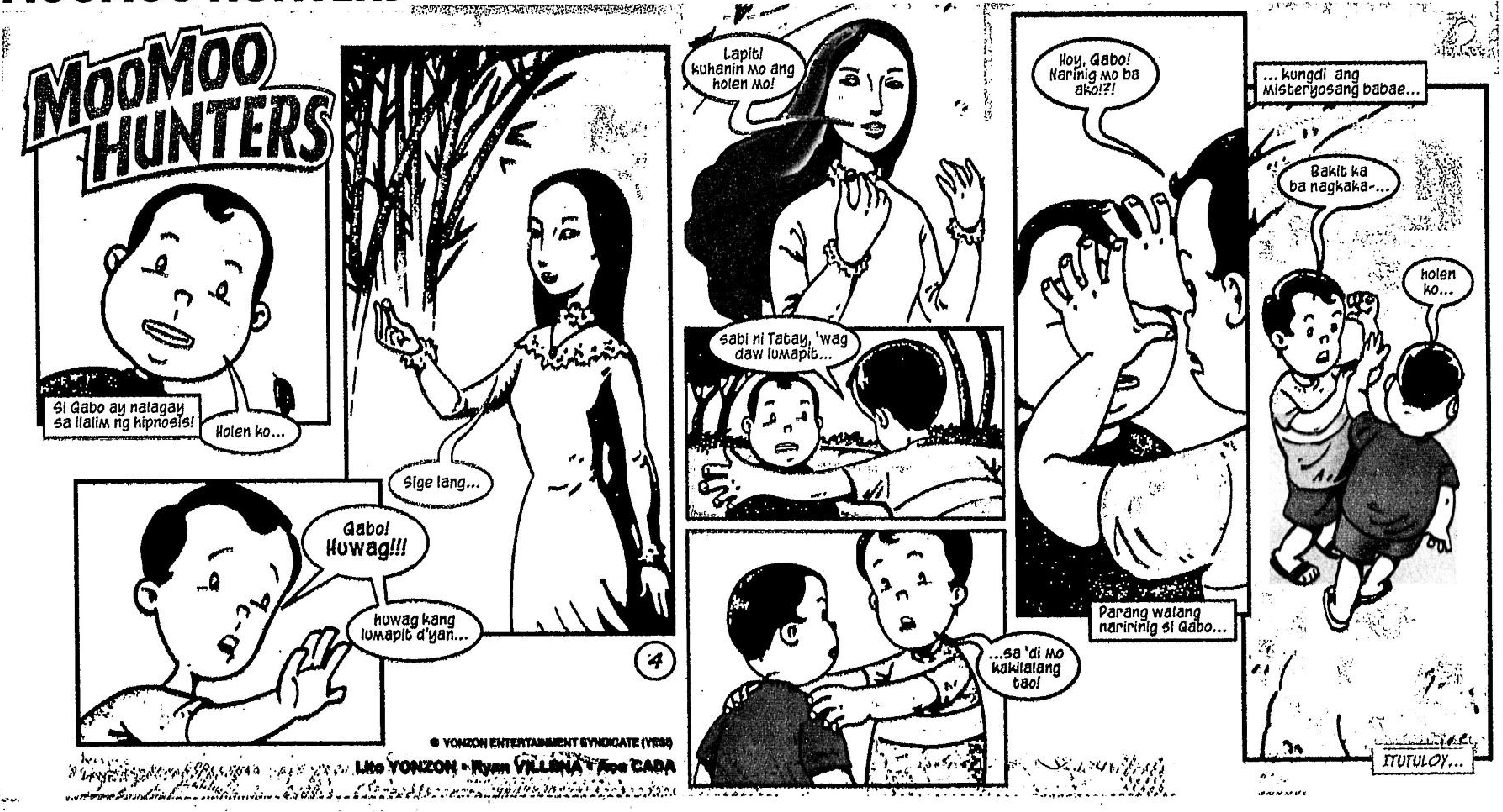
INDAY WANDA

BY BLOG CALIGUIA


O, ANO?! NAWALA YATA TAPANG MO?! PA'NO NA?
Inday Wanda
YARI KA NA PARE!
TAY, MAG-INGAT KA...
DUMATING NA KO SA LUGAR NA IYON AT NAKITA KO MISMO ANG MGA NANGYAYARI...

MOOMOO HUNTERS

BY MANGO COMICS


MooMoo HUNTERS
Si Gabo ay nalagay sa ilalim ng hipnosis!
Holen ko...
Sige lang...
Gabo! Huwag!!!
huwag kang lumapit d'yan...
4
Lapit! kuhanin mo ang holen mo!
Sabi ni Tatay, 'wag daw lumapit...
...sa 'di mo kakilalang tao!
Hoy, Gabo! Narinig mo ba ako!?!
Parang walang naririnig si Gabo...
... kungdi ang misteryosang babae...
Bakit ka ba nagkaka-...
holen ko...
ITUTULOY...

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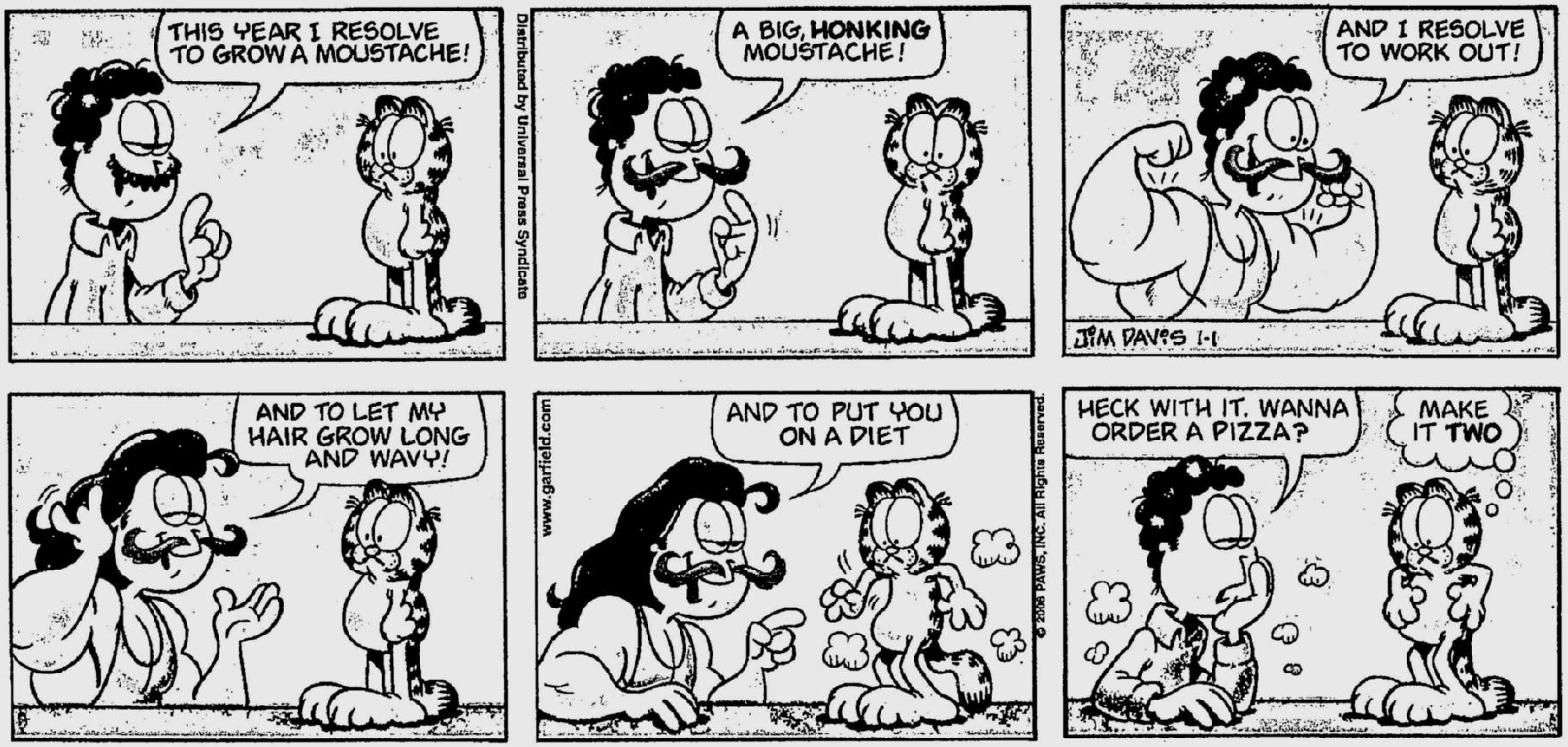
GARFIELD

BY JIM DAVIS


THIS YEAR I RESOLVE TO GROW A MOUSTACHE!
A BIG, HONKING MOUSTACHE!
AND I RESOLVE TO WORK OUT!
JIM DAVIS 1-1
AND TO LET MY HAIR GROW LONG AND WAVY!
AND TO PUT YOU ON A DIET
HECK WITH IT. WANNA ORDER A PIZZA?
MAKE IT TWO

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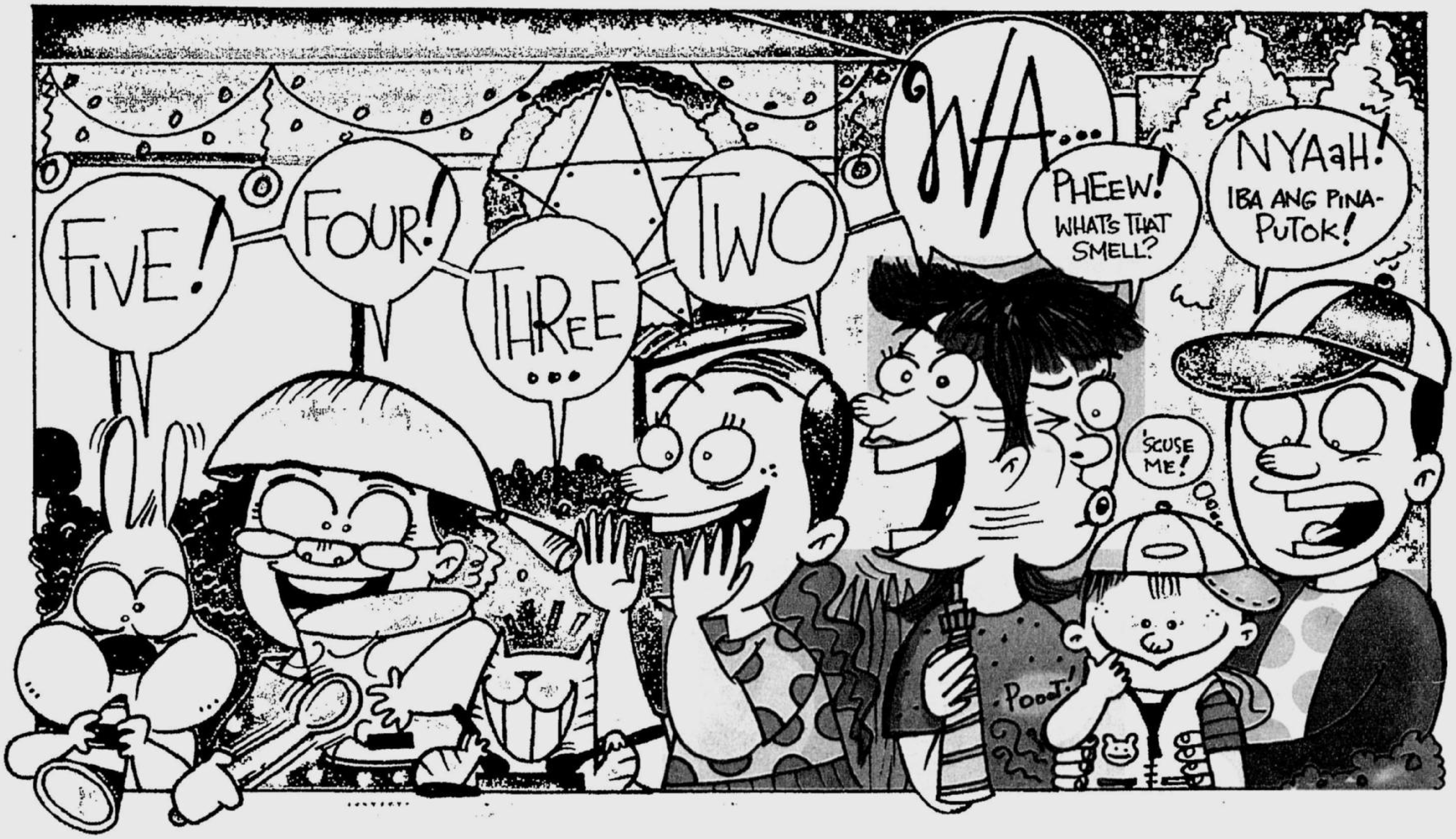
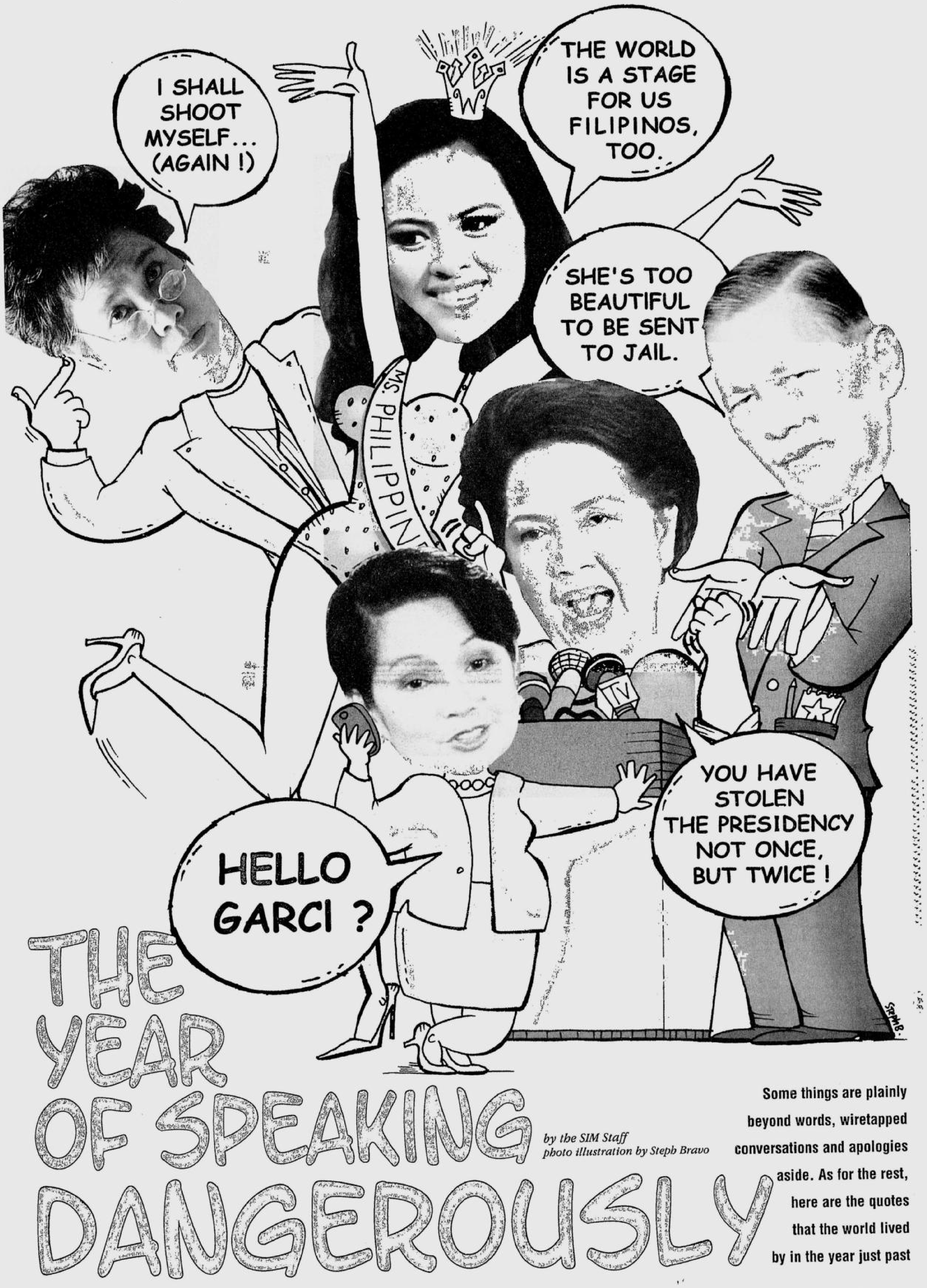
FULL HOUSE

BY STEPH BRAVO


FIVE!
FOUR!
THREE...
TWO
WA...
PHEEW! WHAT'S THAT SMELL?
NYAaH! IBA ANG PINA-PUTOK!
'SCUSE ME!
POOT!

January 1, 2006
sundayINQUIRERmagazine
GET TO KNOW SOME REAL PEOPLE


I SHALL SHOOT MYSELF... (AGAIN !)
THE WORLD IS A STAGE FOR US FILIPINOS, TOO.
MS. PHILIPPIN
SHE'S TOO BEAUTIFUL TO BE SENT TO JAIL.
TV
YOU HAVE STOLEN THE PRESIDENCY NOT ONCE, BUT TWICE !
HELLO GARCI ?
STEPH B.

THE YEAR OF SPEAKING DANGEROUSLY

by the SIM Staff
photo illustration by Steph Bravo

Some things are plainly beyond words, wiretapped conversations and apologies aside. As for the rest, here are the quotes that the world lived by in the year just past

It was a year defined by all that was uttered and denied, the comments and cries both tragic and heroic. There were occurrences that escaped words: the aftermath from days of decimation, the passing of a saint among men. Throughout the modern world, it was a time of mourning and of remembrance, of testament and terror. Closer to home, turmoil trapped our thought balloons as we struggled to believe that such strangeness was real. There was a wiretapped conversation—balancing on the tightrope between the legal and the criminal—a televised apology that fostered neither forgiveness nor fancy, and a brightly-hued house that captured the imagination of voyeurs and televiewers.

It was a year of the ambiguous, of heroes and heels, a year redeemed by men and women who broke sports records and showed the world that we're also capable of greatness, given half a chance.

Here are words that defined our lives in the year just past.

Ruel S. De Vera

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Senior Citizen

Isa sa mga unang nawawala
ang gunita.
Nai-lock ko ba ang kotse kanina?
Saan ko nailapag ang salamin ko?
Ano nga ba ang maiden name ni Karina?
Ano naman ang first name ni Yuchengco?
Katatapos ko lang magsipilyo,
bakit nilagyan ko na naman ng toothpaste ang toothbrush ko?
Lagi na lang ay may bumabagabag
sa dulo ng dila at sa gilid ng utak.
Sa mga sandaling ito, hindi makatkat sa isip
ang ilang nakakabulol na taludtod
ng isang kantang nabahura na sa limot:
"Laba laba-laba laba-laba laba-laba laba-labada.
Maglaba laba-laba laba-laba laba-laba..."
Alam ko kung bakit ang koro
ay hindi mawala-wala sa ulo:
noong araw kasi, isinasampay ko sa dulo ng linya
ang pangalan ng pamilya
at ginagawang knock-knock joke.
Knock-knock!—Who's there?—Lacaba.—Lacaba who?
"Laba laba-laba laba-laba laba-laba laba Lacaba..."
Paano ba nagsisimula ang kantang iyon?
Hindi ako makakatulog ngayong gabi
hanggat hindi bumabalik ang unang linya
sa nirarayumang alaala.
Maalala ko lang,
baka-sakaling mabuo ko uli ang kanta.

Pumapasok na
ang uugod-ugod na hatinggabi sa madaling-araw,
at hinaharana
ng pusang kalye ang pusa namin sa bahay,
ay saka biglang susungaw sa balintataw
ang unang linyang halos magdamag na inaaninaw:
"Juana, Maria at Petra..."
Pero hindi ko pa rin mabuo-buo ang lintik na kanta
dahil pilit na sumisingit
"si Aida o si Lorna o si Fe."

Hinahalinhan ng pag-aalala
ang alaala.
Sino itong papalapit na dilag,
abot-tenga ang ngiti, inaabot ang palad?
Dating estudyante? Dating kaopisina?
Isang gustong magpakilala
na siya'y di-nabalitaang bunga
ng isang gabi ng pagkakasala
sa buhay ng isang makasalanang binata?
Malinaw na ako'y kilala niya.
Bakit hindi ko siya maalaala?
Nakakahiya namang itanong kung ano
ang pangalan niya't apelyido,
kung saang lupalop
unang nagdaop
ang aming mga palad.
Itatanong ko na lang: "Saan ka na ngayon?"
Baka-sakaling sa sagot niya'y may kataga
na kukurot o susundot sa gunita.
Pero ang isasagot niya'y: "Doon pa rin."
Diyos na mahabagin!
Saan ang doon at paano ko iyon mararating
sa loob ng ilang minutong kumustahan?

Urong-sulong ang gunita
sa pagtanda:
may matatandaan kang mukha
na hindi mo mailapat sa akmang pangalan,
at may pangalang nakaukit sa ulirat
na hindi mabigyan ng akmang larawan sa utak.
Sa isang gusali sa Ortigas,
may namataan akong pamilyar na mukha,
pero noon ko lang siya nakitang nakabarong.
"Kumusta na?" sabi niya.
"Dito ka ba nagtatrabaho?" sabi ko.
"May kilala akong dito nagtatrabaho.
Si Chito Francisco."
"Ako," sabi niya, "si Chito Francisco."

"Laba laba-laba laba-laba laba-laba laba-labada.
Maglaba laba-laba laba-laba laba-laba..."

Jose F. Lacaba

JANUARY

"I thought I was already dead."
—Filipino worker **Marco Sangil**, *after he somehow survived the tsunami in Phuket, Thailand, which killed over 100,000 people in 11 countries*

"To conquer evil with the arms of love becomes the way in which each one can contribute to the peace of everybody."
—**Pope John Paul II**, *in a New Year's Day Mass for peace*

"She has said she doesn't want politics, but there are efforts to convince her."
—Fernando Poe, Jr. supporter **Rez Cortez**, *upon announcing a signature campaign to persuade actress Susan Roces to run for office*

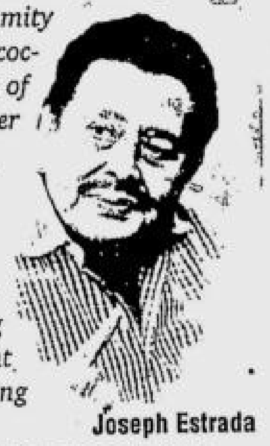
"It's absolute chaos."
—**Titon Mitra** of CARE International, *on running camps in Aceh, Indonesia for the survivors of the tsunami*

"We expect more *calesa* owners to go out of business this year. It is a dying trade."
—**Antonio Gatmaitan**, *president of the Tondo-based Samahan ng mga Kutsero at May-ari ng Kalesa, Inc.*

"In general, seafood in the country is still safe to eat."
—A **Department of Health statement** *after the spread of anonymous text messages warning about a so-called Zulican Virus allegedly found in seafood*

"I cannot begin to imagine the horror that went through the families and all of the people who heard this noise and then had their lives snuffed out by this wave."
—United States Secretary of State **Colin Powell**, *during a visit to Aceh*

"Baguio does not have the monopoly of the disease."
—**Dr. Antonio Bautista**, *DOH Cordillera spokesperson, after Baguio was declared a calamity area due to fatal cases of meningococcemia, clarifying that suspected cases of the virus were being monitored in other provinces, as well*


Joseph Estrada

"I cannot afford it anymore."
—Former President **Joseph Estrada**, *on why he wished to return to the Philippines due to the mounting costs of his medical treatment in Hong Kong*

"We've set ourselves up for spectacular success, or a spectacular failure."
—**Vincent "Chot" Reyes**, *after being named coach of the national men's basketball team*

"It's the biggest crowd we've ever had."
—**Julius Christopher Cuyos**, *operations officer of Quiapo Church, after an estimated half a million devotees attended the yearly feast for the Black Nazarene despite fears of terrorist attacks*

"This is a difficult time, but we remain committed to seeing Philippine eagles roaming freely in the wild for generations to come."
—A **statement** *from the Philippine Eagle Foundation after Kabayan, the lone Philippine eagle bred in captivity, died*

"No one was hurt despite what appeared to be a well-planned operation which specifically targeted the media."
—**A statement from ABS-CBN** *after an alleged pro-FPJ group called "K" burned an ABS-CBN TV van on a Mandaluyong City street due to the network's purported bias*

"We were just joking. You know we always exchange jokes during our talks."
—**Estrada**, *on his previous statements saying that the* INQUIRER *could be the next target of attacks on the media*

"He's totally gone nuts. By all indications, he was mentally disturbed."
—Western Visayas police director **Chief Supt. George Alino**, *on P02 Jonathan Moreno, who opened fire during the Ati-Atihan in Kalibo, Aklan. killing seven people, including Moreno and a 10-year-old girl*

"I've seen dogs nibble human remains. It's horrific."
—**Ahmad Syuhada**, *a resident of Lhok Nga, Indonesia, on the need to move the bodies of the tsunami victims still littering the beaches*

"Why did I leave CNN for here?...I started thinking about my life. 'Where's my personal life? How am I living my life? Am I balancing it?' I also thought it was time to set down roots and when I thought about where, I thought it was going to be in the Philippines."
—Former CNN Southeast Asia bureau chief **Maria Ressa**, *on joining ABS-CBN*

"We have a calling from beyond the stars to stand for freedom, and America will always be faithful to that cause."
—United States President George W. **Bush**, *in his inauguration speech*

"Around this time last year Fernando Poe Jr. heeded the summons to be brave and do what no Filipino had done in quite a while. He gave the common folk hope."
—The **Philippine Daily** INQUIRER, *upon naming FPJ as the* INQUIRER*'s Filipino of the Year for 2004*

Jamby Madrigal

"I hope she'll stop criticizing and instead help us in our campaign. It's easy to criticize but these people have yet to contribute in the campaign one bit."
—Environment Secretary **Mike Defensor,** *on Sen. Jamby Madrigal*

"He must resign. He has failed in his duties. He has done more harm than good. He has done the environment great injury; he has squandered his opportunity to serve the country."
—**Madrigal**, *answering Defensor's statements*

"Never in the history of the PBA has a third party intervened with this authority."
—PBA Commissioner **Noli Eala** *on the pro league's resistance to Talk 'N Text's Asi Taulava playing in the PBA Finals after a Quezon City RTC judge ruled in Taulava's favor*

"When such a culture is allowed to flourish at an official level, it is little wonder that aggrieved local strongmen or political figures turn to hitmen to get even with the media."
—**Gerard Noonan**, *representative of the International Federation of Journalists on the murders of Filipino journalists*

FEBRUARY

"Thus Game 1 of the championship series held last Sunday is hereby declared forfeited in favor of the Barangay Ginebra Kings."
—**Eala**, *after granting Ginerba's protest over Talk 'N Text's Game 1 decision to field Taulava*

"And the victory of freedom in Iraq will strengthen a new ally in the war on terror, inspire democracy reformers from Damascus to Tehran, bring more hope and progress to a troubled region."
—**Bush**, *addressing a joint session of the US Congress*

"The Holy Father's general condition and his respiratory condition are evolving positively."
—A **Vatican statement** *after Pope John Paul II's condition improved, though he remained in hospital*

Imelda Marcos

"We did not even pinch a human rights claimant."
—Former First Lady **Imelda Marcos,** *after a US appeals court decision that US courts could not overturn a Philippine supreme court ruling on $683 million*

"We have already taken the resolute action of pulling out of the NPT (Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty) and have manufactured nukes to cope with the Bush administration's evermore undisguised policy to isolate and stifle the DPRK (Democratic People's Republic of Korea)."
—**A statement from the Korea Central News Agency** *announcing North Korea's possession of nuclear weapons*

"More than ever, we must not pull back but move forward to wipe out the remnants of the Abu Sayyaf."
—President **Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo**, *after deadly bombs went off in Makati, Davao City and General Santos City*

"You really have to find another job. This is death penalty."
—**Teresita Ang-See** *of the Citizens Action Against Crime, issuing a warning to kidnappers after former actor and congressman Dennis Roldan is arrested in connection with a kidnapping*

"The world is now in the gravest possible danger of a pandemic."
—**Shigeru Omi**, *head of the World Health Organization in Asia, on the bird flu that has killed 46 people to date*

"Imagine what life could have been today had we not reclaimed our democracy 19 years ago. Maybe many of us would still be in jail."
—Former President **Corazon Aquino**, *reflecting on the 1986 People Power revolt*

Cory Aquino

To page 3

The Year

...from page 2

"He was a maverick jurist. He was his own man. They could not lead him by the nose, so he was not appointed to the Supreme Court."

—Former Sen. **Rene Saguisag**, *on Sandiganbayan Presiding Justice Francis Garchitorena, who passed away due to cancer at 67*

"I am pretty happy. I got my second win and it is just a good start for me this year."

—Pro golfer **Jennifer Rosales**, *after defeating prodigy Michelle Wie to win the $1 million SBS Open in Hawaii for her second career win in the Ladies Professional Golf Association tour*

MARCH

"I'm just lucky to be here, lucky to still be working and I watched Sidney Lumet out there who's 80 and I figure, I'm just a kid. I've got a lot of stuff to do yet."

—Film director **Clint Eastwood**, *74, whose "Million Dollar Baby" dominated the Oscars, and won a Best Director statuette for Eastwood*

"They are still recovering from the pleasant surprise."

—Senate President **Franklin Drilon**, *on Malacañang's reaction to the Senate's approval of the P907.56 billion budget for 2005*

Chiz Escudero

"I announce the resignation of the government over which I had the honor of presiding so that it does not pose an obstacle."

—Pro-Syrian Prime Minister **Omar Karameh** of Lebanon, *relinquishing power after massive public protests*

"We now believe it is an authentic period piece but definitely not the original."

—National Historical Institute chair **Ambeth R. Ocampo** *on whether the Philippine flag in San Francisco was the original 1898 flag made by Marcela Agoncillo*

"A national debate will give people the proper and true information on the issues and unmask the peddlers of lies and purveyors of misinformation."

—Albay Rep. **Edcel Lagman**, *challenging the Catholic Church to a live debate on family planning*

"We do not accept a *'kanto boy'* challenge like that."

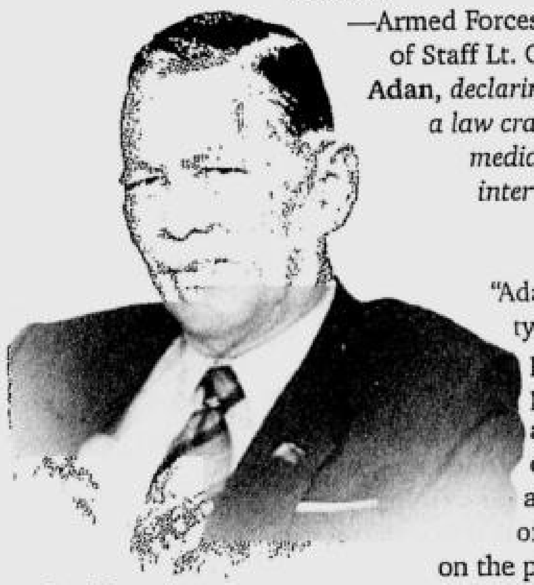
—Lipa Archbishop **Ramon Arguelles**, *responding to Lagman's statement*

"You can be sure that I will never forget the friends that I have met here, all that they have done to help me over these five months, their children, and the stories they have told me."

—American lifestyle icon **Martha Stewart**, *in a statement on her website upon her release from prison after five months*

"Actually we view the interviews as an abuse of press freedom."

—Armed Forces Deputy Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. **Edilberto Adan**, *declaring they wanted a law cracking down on media organizations interviewing known terrorists*



Raul Gonzalez

"Adan engages in typical doublespeak...His proposal is pure and simple censorship and an imposition of prior restraint on the press."

—National Union of Journalists of the Philippines chair **Inday Espina-Varona**, *in reaction to Adan's pronouncement*

"I authorize Secretary Defensor to allow legal logging in two regions, including Caraga."

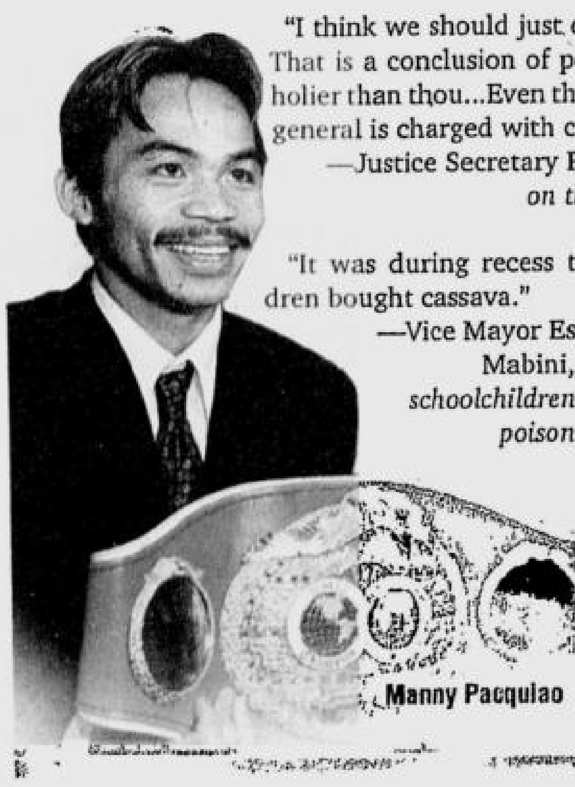
—**Macapagal-Arroyo**, *announcing the lifting of the total log ban in Mindanao upon her arrival in Butuan City*

"Many of the same problems continue. Only the actors have changed."

—A **report** by the Political and Economic Risk Consultancy (PERC) Ltd. *that names the Philippines second overall on a list of most corrupt countries after polling over 900 expatriates in Asia*

"I think we should just disregard that. That is a conclusion of people who are holier than thou...Even the UN secretary general is charged with corruption."

—Justice Secretary **Raul Gonzalez** *on the PERC report*



Manny Pacquiao

"It was during recess time. The children bought cassava."

—Vice Mayor **Ester Tabigue** of Mabini, Bohol *after 27 schoolchildren died from food poisoning after eating cassava cake*

"*Ang tatapang nila. Patay kung patay talaga* (They were gutsy. They didn't care if they died)."

—A **Special Action Force officer**, *after police stormed a jailhouse in Camp Bagong Diwa in Taguig. The assault, ordered after Abu Sayyaf detainees had taken control of the jailhouse, left 22 detainees and a policeman dead*

"And why are they linking him to me when I had so many subordinates? Why are they connecting him to me?"

—Sen. **Panfilo "Ping" Lacson**, *on the National Bureau of Investigation's announcement that fugitive former police Supt. Michael Ray Aquino had been arrested by authorities in the US*

"I won't give it up. Terri is my life."

—**Michael Schiavo**, *husband and legal guardian to Terri Schiavo, a brain-damaged US woman, after attempts by Terri's parents to keep her alive. Michael said that Terri would not have consented to live in such a condition, and had Terri's feeding tube removed*

Ignacio Bunye

"In cases like this one, where there are serious questions and substantial doubts, our laws, and our courts, should have a presumption in favor of life."

—**Bush**, *signing a bill to prolong the life of Terry Schiavo*

"Pacquiao might stop him. He throws too many punches. Morales don't throw too many punches. It will be hard for Morales to keep the guy off."

—Former world boxing champion **Mike Tyson**, *on the upcoming Las Vegas fight between Filipino Manny Pacquiao and Mexican Erik Morales*

"I accept the decision, that's part of the game."

—**Pacquiao**, *after losing a unanimous decision to Morales and suffering a nasty gash due to an unpenalized head butt*

"We don't want a congressman masquerading as a journalist to run a well-respected newspaper. The no. 4 newspaper cannot be taken over by the no. 7 newspaper."

—**Jing Villamente**, vice president of the Manila Standard Employees Association, *in a complaint questioning Makati congressman Teodoro Locsin Jr.'s taking over as publisher of the Manila Standard Today, a broadsheet merging Locsin's Today and the former Manila Standard*

Susan Roces

"I'm in pain, in pain."

—Prince of Pop **Michael Jackson**, *to reporters, saying he suffers from terrible back pain while on trial for sexual molestation*

"We continue to have faith in the collective patriotism of our legislators."

—Malacañang Press Secretary **Ignacio Bunye**, *on his belief that the Senate would pass the controversial VAT bill*

"I want to look pretty when the assassins come to get me."

—Crusading journalist **Marlene Esperat**, 45, *who was gunned down in Sultan Kudarat*

"I'll try to develop the character of the team. I want a good defensive team."

—**Norman Black**, *upon being named new basketball coach of the Ateneo Blue Eagles*

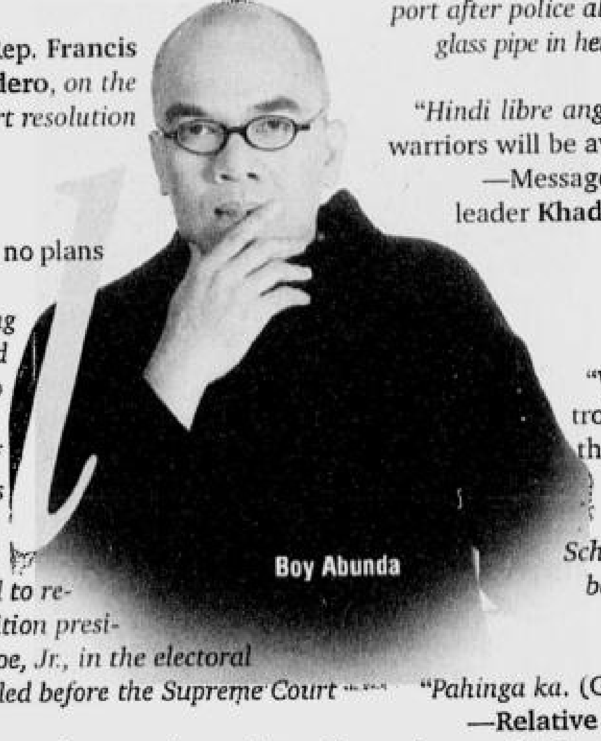
"The moving finger writes; and, having writ, moves on: nor all your Piety nor Wit shall lure it back to cancel half a line, nor all your Tears wash out a Word of it."

—A **Supreme Court resolution**, *quoting Omar Khayyam's "The Rubaiyat," unanimously rejecting the petition of Susan Roces to stand in for her late husband FPJ, effectively torpedoing the actor's poll protest against Macapagal-Arroyo*

"This should have been the legal opportunity for us to know the truth without resorting to other means, but it was trashed."

—House Minority Leader Rep. Francis **"Chiz" Escudero**, *on the Supreme Court resolution*

APRIL



Boy Abunda

"I am just a housewife. I have no plans of mounting anything."

—**Susan Roces**, *asked during a press conference if she had plans of leading a movement to unseat President Arroyo for allegedly robbing her husband of victory in the 2004 elections*

"Enough is enough!"

—**Roces**, *dropping her bid to replace her late husband, opposition presidential candidate Fernando Poe, Jr., in the electoral protest he had filed before the Supreme Court*

"The threat is more long term: that certain portions of Mindanao are so lawless, so porous the borders that you run the risk of it becoming like an Afghanistan situation."

—US Charges d' Affaires **Joseph Mussomeli** *as quoted by Australian TV. The Philippines' Foreign Affairs department summoned the US official for what it describes as a "diplomatic flap," but ruled out the filing of a diplomatic protest against Washington*

"Before we ask a farmer to pay a higher tax on his favorite gin, shouldn't we first remove the tax-free status of surgical procedures on society matrons who want a J-Lo butt?"

—Palawan Rep. **Abraham Mitra**, *who authored a bill imposing a 20 percent excise tax on liposuction and other cosmetic surgeries*

"*Itinataya ko ang aking maliit na pangalan na totoo ang* sex video *ni* Ethel Booba. (I'm putting my humble name on the line to say that Ethel Booba' sex video is real)."

—"The Buzz" host **Boy Abunda** *on the controversial sex tape exposed by his home studio ABS-CBN, that allegedly showed Booba, a star of rival network GMA-7, in a compromising position*

"*Kung sakaling totoo na may* cyber-sex video *si* Paolo Bediones, *ito'y aming pag-aaralan at iimbestigahan* (If it's true that Paolo Bediones has a cyber-sex video, we will study and investigate this)"

—**Abunda**, *on a gay sex video that implicated Paolo Bediones, another GMA-7 talent*

"This will be our crusade from now on. ABS-CBN Star Magic condemns... irresponsible journalism."

—Excerpt of **letter** sent to censors chief Marissa Laguardia by the Kapamilya network, *in complaining that rival GMA-7 aired parts of a sex video on the showbiz program "Star Talk" and named ABS-CBN contract star Piolo Pascual as one of the participants*

"Where is Justice? Where is Truth? Where is Compassion? It is Your Face, Lord, I truly seek. If not now, then after this lifetime."

—Excerpt from the **e-mail** sent to colleagues by former Urban Bank president Ted Borlongan *who was found dead in a cemetery, a suicide note beside him*

"At last..."

—**Headline of London tabloids**, *reporting on the wedding of Prince Charles and long-time lover Camilla Parker Bowles*

"What surprised us was that from zero knowledge at rehearsals, she went to performance level midway during the pageant then just shone all throughout the finals. It was quite impressive."

—Pageant director **Eric Reyes** *on 15-year-old Juliet Chavez who was declared queen of the Palanan, Isabela Sabutan Festival, the first member of the Agta tribal community in the northern Sierra Madre region to have joined and won a beauty pageant*

"*Santo subito*! Make him a saint right away!"

—**Clamor that erupted at St. Peter's Square** *during the wake of Pope John Paul II, who himself had canonized 482 saints and beatified 1,338 during his 26 years of papacy*

"He'll be just like his father. I think he's up to the job."

—Glowing **reaction** from locals in Monaco, *on Prince Albert taking over where his father left off after Prince Rainier, 81, died April 6*

"It's embarrassing then, it's embarrassing now."

—**Court testimony** of the 24-year-old son of Michael Jackson's former maid, *describing how the King of Pop first fondled his genitals more than 15 years ago*

"One flu over the chicken's nest: Is a killer bird flu pandemic upon us?"

—**Title of report** by investment bank CLSA in Hong Kong, *deploring that investors have not focused on the avian influenza virus, that so far has caused the region $8 to 12 billion, not to mention scores of lives lost*

"She was clear-minded for someone who has undergone such an ordeal. She remains alert, strong and focused."

—Los Angeles-based lawyer **Claire Espina**, *on her client actress Nora Aunor, who was arrested at the LA airport after police allegedly found eight grams of shabu and a glass pipe in her carry-on bag on a flight bound for Oakland*

"*Hindi libre ang dugo ng mujahideen* (The blood of our warriors will be avenged)."

—Message to government from Abu Sayyaf Group leader **Khaddafy Janjalani**, *who vowed to avenge the killing of 22 alleged ASG members killed during a failed escape attempt from the Camp Bagong Diwa jail in Taguig*

"We will look at an arrogant, out-of-control, unaccountable judiciary that thumbed their nose at Congress and the President."

—Conservative **US leaders** *to the US Supreme Court which backed Michael Schiavo's petition that his wife, Terri Schiavo, be taken off an artificial lifeline. The court's decision riled pro-life groups in the US*

"*Pahinga ka.* (Get some rest). You're too young to die."

—**Relative** to Mindanao columnist Marlene Esparat, *who was shot by assailants for allegedly exposing corruption among local officials in Gen. Santos City*

"It was free. What's the fuss all about?"

—FG **Mike Arroyo**, *answering criticisms over his alleged use of a $20,000 a night suite in the MGM Grand Hotel in Las Vegas during the boxing match between Manny Pacquiao and Erik Morales of Mexico*

"I'm handing in a resignation letter. I still have things to do."

—PCGG chair **Haydee Yorac's** *response to Malacañang's pressure for her to quit after she resisted administration*

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The Year

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schemes on the disposition of the billion-peso coconut levy funds. Yorac quoted deputy executive secretary Joaquin Lagonera as telling her, "We heard you wanted to resign on April 15."

"Some of the bodies were still burning. We had to extinguish the small flames licking the remains."
—Staff Sgt. **Edward Belmonte** *of the 505 Search and Rescue Group, on the remains of the nine people onboard the Huey helicopter, including former Phivolcs chief Raymundo Punongbayan, that crashed into Mt. Namat in Gabaldon, Nueva Ecija*

Fr. Robert Reyes

"I was very privileged to have had a wonderful sister. She was very kind-hearted."
—**Leticia Ramos,** *on sister Foreign Affairs Asst. Secretary Alicia, who was brutally killed in a break-in at their house*

"Jose Custodio raped me. A legal decision does not change the fact that he raped me."
—**Karen Vertido,** *reacting to the decision of Judge Virginia Europa to acquit the Davao businessman of rape charges filed nine years ago*

"My real program of governance is not to do my own will, not to pursue my own ideas, but to listen."
—**Pope Benedict XVI** *during his installation as the new Pope*

"I call it medical apocalypse, the end of medical practice in the Philippines."
—Philippine Medical Association President **Bu Castro,** *on the current brain drain that has 30 percent of the country's 100,000 doctors migrating to the US*

"It's unfair to be a second class citizen because of love."
—Socialist legislator **Carmen Monton,** *on the passage by Spain's parliament of a law legalizing gay marriages*

MAY

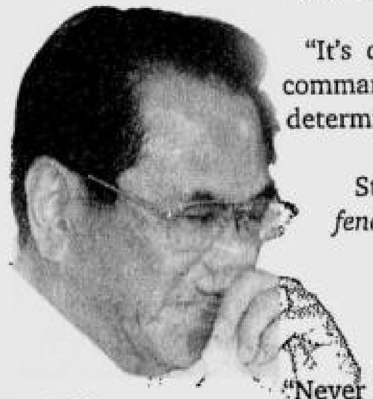
"If someone is giving you a P35-billion profit, I don't know if others would be able to do that. What he has delivered is fact, what others may deliver is speculation."
—President **Macapagal-Arroyo,** *on why she's keeping GSIS President and GM Winston Garcia, who came under fire for receiving P360,000 in monthly pay despite government calls for austerity*

"It was a mistake. To err is human."
—**Vivian Alvarez,** *a Fil-Australian citizen on her wrongful deportation by the Australian government. Though Australian PM John Howard apologized, critics lambasted his government for doing nothing to locate her*

"I don't know about his other companions, but Corpus has no credibility with me. This is really psychotic."
—Environment Sec. **Mike Defensor** *on resigned Natural Resources Development corporation chief Victor Corpus, who quit reportedly because of irregular deals for the government's engine replacement program*

"He is such a great loss. He was an indelible influence on other artists and the way we look at art."
—Asia Art gallery owner **James Onglepho,** *on Ang Kiukok, who succumbed to cancer at age 74*

"I suspect there are people in Malacañang who are acting without the President's knowledge."
—Fr. **Rogelio dela Rosa,** O.P., *on his resignation as chair of the Commission on Higher Education*



Chavit Singson

"It's questioning the wisdom of the commander. That's why he is there—to determine what to prioritize."
—Armed Forces deputy Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. **Edilberto Adan,** *defending AFP Chief of Staff Gen. Efren Abu, who had approved the P19-million renovation of the sidewalks inside Camp Aguinaldo*

"Never again terror, war and genocide. We must remain vigilant."
—Berlin Mayor **Klaus Wowereit,** *at the start of festivities marking the 60th anniversary of the end of the Second World War*

"We never claimed to be a paragon of morals, nor are we the guardians of morality."
—Unilever Philippines' **press statement** *on its position regarding the ad pullout campaign against TV talk shows that have aired sex videos*

"What we want are answers to our questions like when and how we are going to be paid. Our needs are immediate and we need answers."
—**Pacific Plans client** *during a forum organized by the troubled pre-need company*

"It's there, it's part of my compensation package."
—Coconut Industry Investment Fund president **Rolando A. Golez,** *on the new sport utility vehicle that he got upon assuming office. Golez admitted that he used government funds to play golf and travel abroad with his wife*

Archbishop Oscar Cruz

"Rumor is not just cause for dismissal."
—Former National Labor Relations Commission chair **Roy Señeres,** *on GMA's order that he turn over NLRC supervision to Labor Secretary Patricia Sto. Tomas. The President had accused Señeres of engaging in partisan politics to destabilize her government*

"If they can find a room in Las Vegas that's $20,000-a-night, I'll cut off my balls. But if they cannot, they should cut theirs."
—First Gentleman **Mike Arroyo,** *to critics who alleged that he stayed in a $20,000 a night suite in MGM Grand Hotel in Vegas for the Pacquiao-Morales match*

"We regret that we got part of our story wrong, and extend our sympathies to victims of violence and to the US soldiers caught in its midst."
—Newsweek editor **Mark Whitaker** *on the magazine's inaccurate report that US military interrogators desecrated the Koran at Guantanamo Bay*

Mikey Arroyo

"I did not willfully attempt to evade or defeat taxes, and I did not willfully provide incorrect and inaccurate information to the BIR."
—Singer-actress **Regine Velasquez** *who was accused of failing to declare P3.75 million in 2003 as product endorser for Nestle Phils. Actor Richard Gomez and Judy Ann Santos have similarly been charged with tax evasion*

"We get all the blame for the problems here. But Boracay is an international tourist destination. We should all help to preserve it."
—Malay Mayor **Ciceron Cawaling,** *on Boracay's open dump, a 50-foot garbage mound on the other side of this world-class beach*

"It will open a can of worms."
—Sen. **Panfilo Lacson** *on the alleged explosive testimony of four jueteng operators which will link FG Mike Arroyo and son Pampanga Rep. Mikey Arroyo to the illegal numbers game*

Mike Arroyo

"I've never been into *jueteng!*"
—Ilocos Sur Gov. **Luis (Chavit) Singson,** *denying charges that he has returned to operating the illegal numbers game in the Ilocos and Cordillera region, saying he was never into illegal gambling, even before he blew the whistle and linked former President Estrada to jueteng lords*

"I received a check, delivered by courier service LBC, that said P10 million is payable to Oscar Cruz. I asked myself, 'Am I that cheap?' "
—Lingayen-Dagupan Archbishop **Oscar Cruz,** *on the checks he regularly receives from unknown folk. Cruz, who is at the forefront of the fight against jueteng, wondered aloud if they were perhaps from jueteng lords*

"I can assure you I am one President that did not receive any payola."
—President **Macapagal-Arroyo** *to evangelical bishops who prayed over her at the opening of the Metro Manila Franklin Graham Festival Congress of Evangelism*

JUNE

"Small sacrifices."
—Gen. **Jovito Palparan,** *describing the deaths of civilians and local officials during the military anti-insurgency campaign. Palparan has been under fire from various sectors for alleged human rights violations*

"I think the military resort project was one big folly which has given the AFP another black eye."
—Sen. **Aquilino Pimentel** *on the Sampaguita Family Recreation Center, a 60-room military beach resort in Boracay*

"Mr. Witness, kindly tell this court, is there any homosexual relationship between you and Zaky?"
—State prosecutor **Emmanuel Velasco** *to Abu Sayyaf member Gappal Asali during the trial of suspects linked to the Feb. 14 bombing in Makati City. Asali had said that he was the favorite student in martial arts, weapons handling and bomb assembly of Indonesian terror suspect Jackie Zaky*

"I like that. It excites me. You see, I'm still alive."
—Archbishop **Oscar Cruz** *on text messages claiming that he had been ambushed and was in critical condition*

"It will be Bukidnon's wedding of the century."
—Rep. **Miguel Zubiri** *describing his forthcoming wedding to veejay Audrey Tan. The couple wed on Dec. 3*

"Just like the Nazis treated the Jews, you know, that's how the immigration police treated us."
—Philippine Ambassador to Israel **Tony Modena,** *describing the abuses against Filipinos in Israel. Modena later apologized for his remarks*

"I am not the Lion King but he must be the Liar King."
—Rep. **Mikey Arroyo** *on confessed jueteng bagman Richard Garcia, who implicated him in the jueteng scandal*

"Hello, Garci?"
—President **Macapagal-Arroyo** *allegedly speaking to Comelec Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano, in the controversial phone conversation about election results*

President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo

"We will do our best."
—**"Garci's" response** *to GMA's question on whether her lead in the elections could fall below 1-million votes. The line was among the most incriminating excerpts from the "Hello, Garci" tapes*

"*Sabihin mo sa amo mo, walang bagyo-bagyo sa amin. Ang pinag-usapan, pinag-usapan.* (Tell your boss there is no such thing as a storm for me. What's been agreed on should be followed)."
—Confessed jueteng bagwoman **Sandra Cam,** *quoting presidential brother-in-law Iggy Arroyo, to whom she allegedly submitted her jueteng collection regularly*

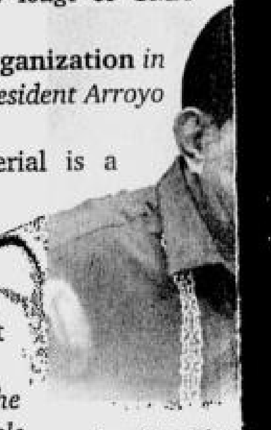
"I am calling on Susan Roces because this tape would show that her husband was cheated."
—Former NBI deputy director **Samuel Ong,** *on what he claims was the master tape of the purported conversation between President Arroyo and Comelec commissioner Virgilio Garcillano*

"I am asking you this question directly or pointblank: Are you the voice on the tape? Answer yes or no."
—Rep. **Francis "Chiz" Escudero** *to President Macapagal-Arroyo, on the "Hello, Garci" tapes*

"I have felt the political heat but I am still in the kitchen because this is where I belong."
—President **Macapagal-Arroyo** *to diplomats and government officials on why she will not step down despite calls for her resignation on the heels of the "Hello, Garci" tape*

"Justice is done. The man is innocent, he always was."
—Michael Jackson's lead attorney **Thomas Mesereau, Jr.** *on the acquittal of his client on child-molestation charges*

"Gays and Lesbians for the Immediate *Tsugi* of GMA (GALIT GMA)."
—Newly formed **gay and lesbian organization** *in Baguio calling for the resignation of President Arroyo*



Aquilino Pime

"Mere possession of wiretapped material is a violation of the law."
—NBI Director **Reynaldo Wycoco** *on the "Hello, Garci" ringtone*

"They want to entrap me, but I will not surrender to the destabilizers."
—President **Macapagal-Arroyo** *about the opposition's efforts to get her to admit her role in the "Hello, Garci" tape*

"I am not his keeper."
—Comelec chair **Benjamin Abalos** *when asked where Virgilio Garcillano was. The ex-Comelec official dropped out of sight just before the scheduled Senate hearings on the authenticity of the "Hello, Garci" tape*

"Just love them."
—Drummer **Nino Alejandro's** *advice to fans on how to deal with cancer patients during a fund-raising concert for cancer support groups. Alejandro's mother, actress Rio Diaz, succumbed to colon cancer after a six-year battle*

"I consider everything as God's handiwork...I am just an instrument, like the donkey the Lord rode on."
—**Jaime Cardinal Sin,** *who passed away at 76, on June 21*

"Thank God, I was given a second lease on life."
—**Filipino accountant Robert Tarongoy,** *upon his release from his Iraqi captors who held him for 233 days*

Noli de Cas

"I can't understand why the President, when asked if it was her voice on the tape, would answer, 'I won the election fair and square.' "
—**Marvic Leonen,** *UP Vice President for legal affairs, who suggested organizing a "It's Not My Voice Movement" that would ask each and every Filipino to go on record saying that it was not his or her voice on the "Hello, Garci" tape until only one is left*

"I am sorry. *Pinagsisisihan ko ito nang lubosh.*"
—President **Macapagal-Arroyo,** *admitting after 22 days of stonewalling that it was her voice heard on the controversial "Hello, Garci" tapes. She apologized for her "lapse of judgment" but insisted that her call to a high-ranking Comelec official in no way affected the results of the 2004 presidential elections*

"If we hold on together..."
—***line from the Diana Ross song*** *sang by Cabinet members to show President Arroyo their full support after the Chief Executive apologized for her "lapse in judgment"*

"The gravest thing that you have done is that you have stolen the presidency, not once, but twice."
—**Susan Roces** *to President Arroyo, demanding her immediate resignation following GMA's admission that it was indeed her voice on the "Hello, Garci" tape*

"She's too beautiful to be sent to jail."
—Justice Secretary **Raul Gonzalez** *on Susan Roces, adding that the actress broke no law when she called for GMA's resignation*

"When I ran for vice president, I knew that one of my major duties was always to be prepared in the event the presidency becomes vacant. "
—Vice President **Noli de Castro,** *reacting to calls for President Arroyo's resignation*

JULY

"I am 72 years old. I feel so old."
—Former president **Corazon Aquino,** *begging off on leading another "People Power" revolt*

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"The argument of those in the administration is to frighten the people by asking, 'If Gloria goes, who will replace her? Noli? Do they want him?'"
—Rep. **Chiz Escudero**, *on how the "Noli factor" works in favor of GMA*

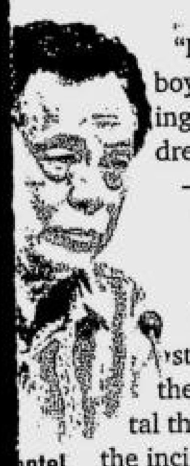
"I am not resigning my office."
—President **Macapagal-Arroyo**, *answering calls for her resignation*

"She's finished. She's history."
—Sen. **Aquilino Pimentel**'s *fearless forecast on GMA after 11 key Cabinet secretaries and key officials resigned their posts*

"Since June 27, she dug her own political grave. It's very difficult for a leader to govern from the grave she herself dug."
—Sen. **Panfilo Lacson** *on GMA's prospects*

"We do not demand her resignation. Yet, neither do we encourage her simply to dismiss such a call from others. For we recognize that nonviolent appeals for her resignation, the demand for a Truth Commission and the filing of an impeachment case are not against the Gospel."
—The **Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines** *weighs in on Gloriagate*

"I am deeply grateful to the CBCP for its statement of guidance and wisdom. I appreciate their collective voice of moderation and temperance at this time of national soul searching."
—President **Macapagal-Arroyo** *responds to the CBCP statement*



ntel

"My message to the Arroyo enemies is: goodbye boys. You gave it your best shot, but she's still standing. Time to disappear into the woodwork and sweet dreams."
—Sen. **Miriam Defensor Santiago**, *interpreting the CBCP statement as a clear setback for the anti-GMA camp*

"As you are probably aware of, that word is Tagalog street slang for the vulva. While it is clearly shown in the video footage that the utterance was more accidental than deliberate, Management is still not pleased with the incident."
—**GMA-7 management** *in a memorandum to talk show host Rufa Mae Quinto, after she referred to short shorts as "p-kp-k" shorts on a noontime variety show*

"She might be a sinner but she can still implement the much-needed reforms and possibly become a saint... We're afraid of the Noli factor."
—Bro. **Manuel de Leon**, *vice chairman of the Association of Major Religious Superiors, erring on the side of caution*

"The script is wrong."
—Former President **Joseph Estrada** *reacting to the so-called "X-tapes" containing alleged conversations between him and former AFP Chief of Staff Joselin Nazareno discussing a removal of GMA from power, leaked by Ilocos Sur Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson*

"The Communist Party... should have listened to an aphorism of its guru, Karl Marx: 'History repeats itself, first as tragedy, second as farce'... Attempts by the opposition and the Left to repeat Edsa I as history, which the Hyatt 10, Cory Aquino and the Ayala rally last Wednesday did, are clearly a farce."
—Presidential Management Staff Chief **Rigoberto Tiglao**, *on the failure of the opposition to unseat GMA*

ro

"I remain loyal to the country and the people who voted for me. I am not doing this for the president, but for our country."
—Vice President **Noli de Castro** *on why he refused to heed opposition calls to resign*

AUGUST

"Two generations ago, there was a man who ruled us and declared martial law. He ran away with so much money. And have we forgotten? How come no one's talking about it anymore, as if it had been solved?"
—Manila Archbishop **Gaudencio Rosales**, *on why getting rid of GMA won't solve anything*

"Madame Gloria, I'm sorry. I didn't know it would all come to this All we wanted was for *jueteng* to be eliminated. I don't think you'll see me at the impeachment trial."
—Jueteng whistle-blower **Richard Garcia**, *on how he was pressured by the opposition to link the First Family to jueteng operations*

"When I was 20, I wanted to change the world; at 30, I wanted to change my country; at 60, I realized I wanted only to change myself."
—Former Sen. **Raul Roco**, *who died on August 5 at age 63*

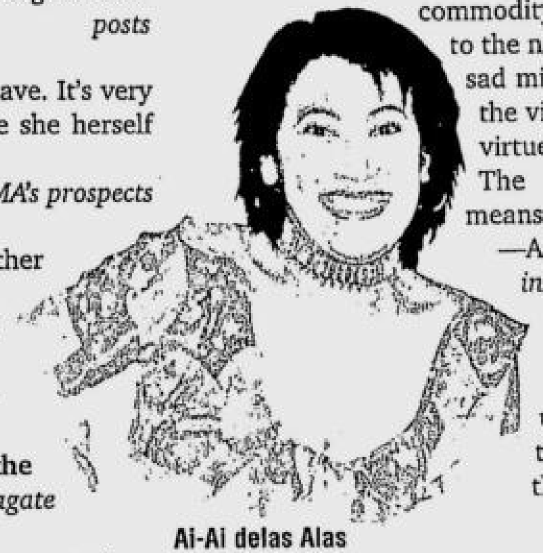
"President Marcos left Malacañang by plane. I left by boat. She will leave by stroller."
—Former president **Joseph Estrada**, *on the inevitability of GMA's fall from power, as quoted in the South China Morning Post*

"Why would I say something like that? I found God during my detention and I have forgiven my enemies because I realized that what happened to me is the will of God."
—**Estrada**, *explaining that his earlier statement was actually a text joke*

SEPTEMBER

"Don't look at us... we can't be the heroes that you want us to be."
—Former BIR Commissioner **Guillermo Parayno**, *speaking on behalf of the "Hyatt 10"*

"The principle of morality does not apply in the situation."
—Archbishop **Fernando Capalla**, *seeing nothing wrong with various bishops receiving a total of P3.3 million as "Christmas cash gifts" from Pagcor*



Ai-Ai delas Alas

"Money from vice cannot be cleansed into a virtuous commodity by simply throwing this away to the needy, the hungry, the sick. It is a sad mistake to think that money from the vice of gambling can usher in the virtues of benevolence and charity. The end does not justify the means—this is elementary morality."
—Archbishop **Oscar Cruz**, *denouncing the church's acceptance of gambling money from Pagcor*

"It's the media that's dividing us. You make it appear as though there's infighting among us when there is none."
—**Ricardo Cardinal Vidal**, *archbishop of Cebu*

"They came to watch, not to be killed."
—Greyhoundz frontman **Reg Rubio** *on the stampede that left two dead at the Muziklaban concert*

"At a time when public opinion of government officials has sunk to an all-time low, we mourn the loss of one public servant who showed that integrity and probity among public officials is not only possible, it is also necessary to be truly effective."
—**Sen. Francis Pangilinan**, *remembering PCGG Commissioner Haydee Yorac, who died Sept. 12*

"These are all mine. Please stop this. This is too much repression."
—Former First Lady **Imelda Marcos**, *petitioning the courts to stop the government from auctioning off her jewelry collection*

Bongbong Marcos

"It is time to put behind us this divisive episode of impeaching the president. It is time to embrace a period of healing and reconciliation for the nation."
—Speaker **Jose de Venecia** *after the House of Representatives votes 158 to 52 in favor of junking the impeachment complaint against GMA*

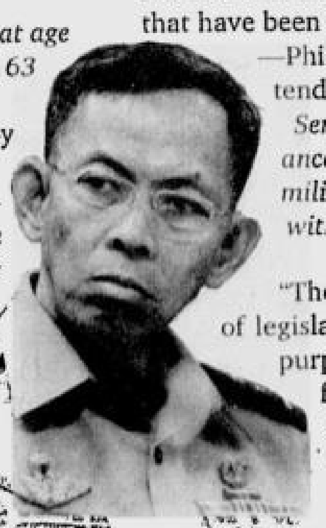
"Humanitarian or political? Whatever. The Constitution never said that it must be for political or humanitarian reason... it's something only the president can decide."
—Justice Secretary **Raul Gonzales**, *on the possibility that former congressman Romeo Jalosjos, currently serving two life sentences for raping a minor, may receive a presidential pardon because of a heart ailment*

"It is totally appalling to women and children to witness hard-earned justice bastardized under the leadership of a woman."
—Gabriela party-list representative **Liza Masa**, *speculating that the Jalosjos pardon may be payback for Jalosjos' political support for GMA*

"If there is a president that should be buried at the Libingan ng mga Bayani, it is him because he was president for the longest time."
—Ilocos Norte Gov. **Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr.**, *on his father, and complaining that his family is the victim of human rights abuses*

"I'm tired of chasing the bully around the schoolyard... We cannot let this continue. Our policy of maximum tolerance has been abused, these rights have become licentious, to the detriment of the peace and order and the welfare of the greater majority."
—**President Macapagal-Arroyo**, *talking tough against anti-government demonstrations*

"I don't think I'm the fall guy here."
—National Security Adviser **Norberto Gonzales**, *shortly before being cited by the Senate for contempt and detained for hemming and hawing on the issue of hiring a Washington lobby firm on behalf of the Philippine government*



Maj. Gen. Jovito Palparan

"My conscience has bothered me for being silent despite the fact that there were vital issues of national importance that have been the cause of national controversy."
—Philippine Military Academy assistant superintendent Brig. Gen. **Francisco Gudani** *before the Senate, testifying to poll fraud in Lanao in defiance of a Malacañang memorandum prohibiting military officials from appearing before Congress without permission. He was subsequently sacked*

"There is a need to prevent such inquiries in aid of legislation from being used for partisan political purposes, disrupting diplomatic relations with foreign governments, and weakening the stability of the state thereby impeding the efforts of the government to generate and attract foreign investments."
—**Executive Order 464**, *the presidential gag order invoked by the AFP command in sacking Brig. Gen. Gudani*

"This is the essence of the coercive power of the State. Under this, we have the authority to terrorize the bad elements of society...I vehemently deny any involvement in human rights violation...show me the facts. What I know was that those neutralized were deeply involved in the rebel movement."
—Maj. Gen. **Jovito Palparan**, *commander of the 7th Infantry Division, explaining why the use of force is the most effective way to combat insurgency, and denying accusations that he violated human rights*

OCTOBER

"I have to put my foot down for the sake of the people, for the sake of enabling the government to work rather than be disabled by the politics of insult."
—President **Macapagal-Arroyo**, *on why she issued EO 464, which bars government executives, police and military officials from testifying in Congress*

"My, have they got their signals crossed! I am not a magician nor a Pied Piper."
—Former President **Cory Aquino**, *reacting to claims that she had lost her magic and was unable to rally People Power against GMA*

'05 MISS INTERNATIONAL

Precious Lara Quigaman

"I have seen them all. All that is left is their head and feet."
—Indonesian Maj. Gen. **Ansyaad Mbai** *on the three suicide bombers who killed 26 people in Bali*

"They were like a breeze in the face. Their victories gave us respite from political hatred."
—Manila Mayor **Lito Atienza** *on Filipino boxing champions Manny Pacquiao, Brian Viloria and Rey "Boom Boom" Bautista, who were taken on a motorcade through the city*

"The world stage is not only for other nationalities, but for us Filipinos, too."
—**Precious Lara Quigaman,** *Miss International 2005, the first Filipina winner in 26 years, during a parade in her honor*

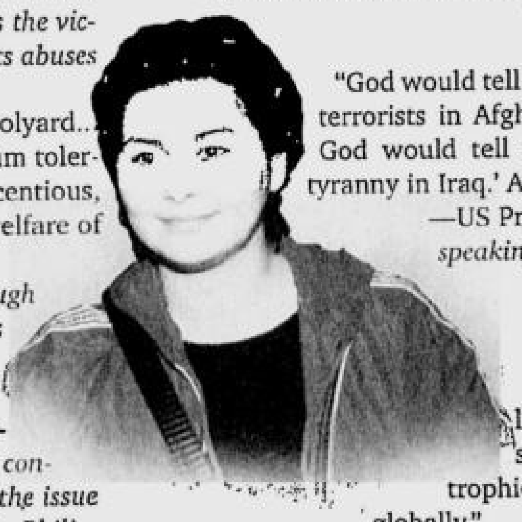
"I'm so tired of looking for the perfect man."
—Comedienne **Ai-Ai de las Alas,** *admitting that she was again in a gay relationship*

"If my statements constitute clear and present danger I will shoot myself right before your eyes, here in the session hall."
—Sen. **Miriam Defensor Santiago,** *blasting opponents during a senate privilege speech*

"She should tell me what day and what time—I'll prepare my cellphone to take a video of it."
—Rep. **Rolex Suplico,** *in reaction to Santiago's outburst. Santiago also said she should have failed Suplico, her former student*

"It's purely harassment of a righteous and principled man."
—Archbishop **Oscar Cruz** *in defense of Eddie Villanueva, who was charged with estafa by businessman (and Mike Arroyo's relative) Benito Araneta*

"Many told me that I should have joined the PBA draft because of my situation, that I should have helped my mother. So, this year I wanted to show them there were reasons...there was a purpose."
—FEU Tamaraws star player, MVP and family breadwinner **Arwind Santos,** *after the Tams beat La Salle to bag the UAAP championship*



Aiko Melendez

"God would tell me, 'George, go and fight those terrorists in Afghanistan.' And I did, and then God would tell me, 'George, go and end the tyranny in Iraq.' And I did."
—US President **George Bush,** *allegedly speaking to Palestinian leader Mahmud Abbas in an upcoming BBC documentary*

"If avian flu does mutate to allow human to human transmission, the results would be catastrophic, locally, regionally and globally."
—**Paula Dobriansky,** *US Undersecretary of State for Democracy and Global Affairs*

"This fascist General's idiotic parallelism is an insult to man's best friend."
—Partylist Rep. **Rafael Mariano** *on Gen. Eduardo Ermita's comparison of policemen to dogs in their "calibrated preemptive response" during protest rallies*

"I will bring my children with me so that they won't have to cry."
—**Suicide note** *left by a Filipina living in Japan, who stabbed herself and her three children, aged 13, 8 and 9 months, because of money problems*

"I'd rather do drama than horror. I don't scare easy, so I had to do many retakes."
—Filipino actress **Alessandra de Rossi,** *on her lead role in the hit Singaporean horror flick "The Maid"*

To page 6

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The Year

...from page 4

"You're ugly. If you looked good, you'd be a movie star by now."
—**Aiko Melendez,** *allegedly speaking to businesswoman Happy Ongpauco, who filed charges against Melendez after an altercation at Nuvo Restaurant*

"Filipinos come to the rescue every time."
—**Peping Cojuangco,** *CEO of the Philippine SEAG Organizing Committee, signing a P50 million support package for the SEAG athletes with the Lucio Tan Group of Companies*

"When the earthquake came it was like Judgment Day."
—Pakistani survivor **Fazal Elahi,** *after a 7.6-intensity quake killed some 40,000 in Kashmir*

Katrina Legarda

"That is the problem with the Americans—they meddle with us and then they don't cooperate with us."
—Justice Secretary **Raul Gonzalez,** *disappointed that the US had not responded to requests for information on the Michael Ray Aquino case*

"Violence kills and disables as many women between the ages of 15 and 44 as cancer."
—**UN Population Fund** *report on the condition of women worldwide*

"It implies that they have not only given me this award for my work but for my political engagement."
—British playwright **Harold Pinter,** *on winning the Nobel Prize for Literature*

"This is in complete violation of the rights of the people."
—*Former vice president* **Teofisto Guingona,** *after being blasted with water cannons during a protest rally in Plaza Miranda*

"This woman is going bananas."
—Sen. **Serge Osmeña,** *after GMA ordered a rally dispersed with water cannons*

"Brute force should not be used against the elderly."
—El Shaddai head **Mike Velarde** *on the rally dispersal, in his first public expression of displeasure at GMA*

"We think the use of a fire hose has a cooling effect."
—Chief Supt **Leopoldo Bataoil** *of the PNP, on using water cannons on protesters*

"Corruption isn't a natural disaster. It is the cold, calculated theft of opportunity from the men, women and children who are least able to protect themselves."
—**David Nussbaum** *of Transparency International, which reported corruption in the Philippines as "severe"*

"If you are the father of your men, then I'm the mother. Let's get marrried then."
—Sen. **Jamby Madrigal** *proposing in jest to Chief Supt. Edgardo Doromal in order to protect the police officer assigned as her bodyguard, who was allegedly seen toting a gun*

"A weird melange of emotions: fear, excitement, anxiety, calm, blessedness."
—**Lea Salonga,** *on her feelings on impending motherhood*

"I said what I said, I am not guilty, I am innocent."
—**Saddam Hussein,** *after his trial began in Baghdad*

Gina de Venecia

"I plead guilty to the fact that I thought GMA would be a better alternative to Erap."
—**Cory Aquino**

"I am elated."
—Former President **Joseph Estrada** *on news that Cory Aquino had admitted making a mistake in backing GMA*

"Palparan is the harbinger of death."
—Bayan Muna Rep. **Joel Virador** *on Maj. Gen. Jovito Palparan, allegedly behind the mass killings in Central Luzon*

"The President is much worse than Marcos, because even during martial law, he never banned masses involving the opposition."
—**Fr. Robert Reyes,** *reacting to Malacañang's requests that masses catering to the opposition be banned from San Miguel Cathedral*

"Let's see what his bosses will have to say."
—**President Macapagal-Arroyo** *to* INQUIRER *columnist Ramon Tulfo on ABS-CBN broadcaster Julius Babao, who allegedly posted bail for the leader of a terrorist group. Babao denied the accusation.*

NOVEMBER

"The accident could have been avoided if the chart was accurate. We feel responsible, however."
—**Red Constantino** *of Greenpeace after the environmental group's ship, the* Rainbow Warrior, *ran aground in Tubbataha*

Virgilio Garcillano

"We appreciate the work that Greenpeace continues to do for the environment. (However), you're navigating, you take all the precautions."
—**Angelique Songco** *of the Tubbataha Management Office*

"I am just sad that I am leaving amidst this scenario...I love my team, I love my school."
—La Salle Green Archers manager **Terry Capistrano,** *resigning amidst an eligibility scandal involving two La Salle players*

"We apologize for the unintentional lapse... we got one alright, but only a lookalike."
—PNP Director General **Arturo Lomibao,** *on capturing the wrong Commander Putol*

"We are as indignant as any other Filipino over this case, but emotional outbursts will help neither the vic tim nor the cause of impartial justice."
—Press Secretary **Ignacio Bunye** *on protests against the Subic rape case*

"I've sung all over the world but nothing quite prepared me for this."
—**Lea Salonga,** *performing to standing ovations in Carnegie Hall*

"You cannot judge based on the video alone. You wouldn't know the situation on the ground."
—Interior and Local Government Secretary **Angelo Reyes,** *defending policemen involved in the rubout of alleged carnappers*

"She's not a winner by any measure, yet she has the temerity to lecture about being good and fair."
—Sen. **Panfilo Lacson,** *in reaction to GMA's call for media to cover only winners, not losers*

Rolex Suplico

"I take this as a personal affront, not only to my person but to others like me—humble actors, actresses and basketball players—who have worked hard to prove ourselves worthy of the task and office reposed upon us by the electorate."
—Sen. **Jinggoy Estrada,** *in reaction to the DepEd memo from a Catanduanes high school official exhorting people not to vote for actors and basketball players in elections*

"The tapes, to me, are insignificant, I am really sorry to say."
—National Security Adviser **Norberto Gonzales** *on the "Hello, Garci" tapes*

"This is not as easy as the Jalosjos case. This is much more difficult."
—Atty. **Katrina Legarda** *on her new case, after she was assigned by the DSWD to defend the 22-year-old Subic rape victim*

"My grandmother's house is across Malacañang!"
—Fil-Australian Rockstar INXS finalist **Mig Ayesa** *on a visit to the Philippines, when asked to prove he was really Filipino*

"You can't give back to somebody four years of their life."
—Lawyer **Marcus Einfeld,** *lawyer of Vivian Alvarez, the naturalized Australian who was wrongfully deported back to the Philippines in 2001*

"My Spanish teacher told me 'rovo' sounded like 'robo,' which means robbery in Spanish."
—Rep. **Rolex Suplico** *on the Arrovo P100 bills*

"Just as women are not meant to become priests, men are neither intended to become nuns. This is distinction, not discrimination."
—Lingayen Bishop **Oscar Cruz,** *on why gays cannot be nuns or priests*

"One cannot ignore the negative consequences that can stem from the ordination of people with deeply rooted homosexual tendencies."
—**Church document** *from the Vatican on gay seminarians*

"I am a victim of violence."
—**Plinky Recto,** *at a press conference where she revealed that her former partner allegedly beat her up*

"The panty symbolizes a woman's private space which is intruded upon when it is removed."
—Makalaya chair **Tess Borgonos** *during an anti-povery "panty" protest in Manila*

"*Kinikilabutan ako* (I get goose bumps)."
—**Shiela Mae Perez** *of Davao after winning gold in the SEA Games for synchronized diving along with Ceseil Domenios*

"I was here all this time... I feel that I'm more safe here with my friends."
—Former Comelec Commissioner **Virgilio Garcillano,** *after a two-hour interview where he was wearing a tubao and said he was hiding out with Moro friends*

DECEMBER

"Donations, to be ethical, should come from clean hands and should be for a good purpose."
—An **anonymous priest** *on the propriety of GMA's alleged donation of P1 million to Archbishoip Gaudencio Rosales*

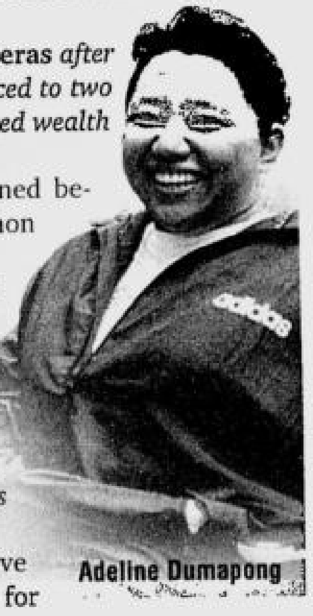
"How can a legitimate business, which pays a minimum wage, pays income tax, pays custom duties... compete with a *tiangge* operation that is probably selling the same goods?"
—Businessman **Raul Concepcion** *on the Divisoria 168 Mall, and how it has eaten into retailing*

"Everyone thinks there's some kind of divine or mellow thing in getting older, but there's no advantage to it at all."
—**Director Woody Allen** *on turning 70*

"It is hard to win at the Games since the hosts are cheating."
—**Jaruk Areerajakaran,** *Secretary General of Thailand's Olympic Committee, claiming that the Philippines was cheating*

"You won the game, we lost the game but the friendship remains."
—Thai Deputy Prime Minister **Suwat Liptapanlop,** *after watching the tennis finals in Manila, where Filipino Cecil Mamiit won handily*

"*Ano ba ito? Artista na pala ako* (What's this? Oh, I'm an actor)."
—**Nathan Lopez,** *acclaimed 14-year-old star of "Ang Pagdadalaga ni Maximo Oliveros," the accalimed independent movie hit of 2005*



Adeline Dumapong

"In practice, this hard labor is not carried out. It's inappropriate for an officer to do hard labor."
—Military Prosecutor Col. **Al Perreras** *after ex-Maj. Gen. Carlos Garcia was sentenced to two years of hard labor for unexplained wealth*

"It's the best thing that ever happened because it unites the country for one common cause."
—Top Pinoy SEAG medalist and swimmer **Miguel Mendoza** *at the well-attended parade of athletes on Ayala after the Games. Mendoza won three golds, a silver and a bronze. The Philippines finished overall winner in the SEAG with 291 medals*

"I'm not saying that you should believe what I'm saying. But I really can't say for sure if it was my voice."
—**Virgilio Garcillano** *during the senate hearing on the "Hello Garci" tapes*

"While I am not big with words, I am big and bold in dreams and vision."
—**Henry Sy** *of the SM chain of malls, awarded Father of Philippine Retail by the Philippine Retailers Association*

"I'd like to start my life all over again."
—**Nene Tamayo** *after emerging the winner of the Pinoy Big Brother reality show, and going home with P6 million in cash and prizes*

"We do not ask for special treatment, only for equality."
—Weightlifter **Adeline Dumapong** *at the start of the SEA Para Games for People With Disabilities. Dumapong would go on to shatter her personal records*

"Events have proven me right. She is corrupt and ruthless and will do everything to stay in power."
—Marine Capt. **Nicanor Faeldon,** *a leader of the Oakwood mutiny, on GMA, after he escaped from custody*

"That's her problem. I'm not making that my problem."
—**Susan Roces,** *on the political turmoil besieging the president, speaking to reporters on the eve of FPJ's first death anniversary*

"I am not his man. He's my man."
—Retired General **Fortunato Abat,** *denying rumors that his former boss, former President Fidel V. Ramos, was behind the "transition government" that Abat had declared*

"I would like to emphasize that Abat is not under arrest. He is, however, detained right now for purposes of tactical interrogation."
—Sec. **Raul Gonzalez,** *after Abat was picked up by plainclothes policemen*

"*Ang tagal n'yo naman magtanong* (It took you a while to ask)."
—The late NBI Chief **Reynaldo Wycoco,** *when asked if he would withdraw support from Erap*

"You know, I spent more time with the court than Mrs. Davide... So there you are, Gigi, I'll be back to you."
—Retiring Chief Justice **Hilario Davide,** *promising his wife Virginia that he could now spend more time at home*

"No prison is large enough, or evil strong enough, to stop a people's forward march to freedom."
—Sis. **Mariani Dimaranan,** *feisty human rights activist nun, who passed away recently of a heart condition*

"I am mad. I have a lot of rage right now."
—Former Sen. **Freddie Webb,** *after the Court of Appeals upheld the conviction of son Hubert for his alleged involvement in the Vizconde Massacre*

"We felt insulted because only APO members are supposed to join the Oblation Run."
—**Joselito Narciso Caparino** *of the UP Alpha Phi Omega fraternity, after two masked naked women stole the show at this year's UP Oblation Run*

"You just learn to live with it. But the pain is always there, in the heart."
—**Gina de Venecia** *on the first death anniversary of daughter KC, speaking at the groundbreaking of the Ina Healing Center in Quezon City, a foundation for women who have lost their children. KC died in a fire in December 2004*

"I see my appointment as an opportunity to be of even

To page 7

The Year

...from page 6

greater service to God and country."

—*Newly appointed Supreme Court Chief Justice* **Artemio Panganiban**

"We have to end this. Too much blood has been spilled."

—Farmers' Representative **Jaime Tadeo,** *after the Cojuangcos officially lost Hacienda Luisita*

"Let me state for the record that there is no such thing as a P42 billion debt of Meralco to Napocor."

—Meralco chair **Manuel Lopez**

"I think it's a great day for Britain...everyone deserves to be with the person they choose—gay, straight, whatever."

—**Richard Kendall** *of Windsor, on news of gay singer Elton John's marriage to long-time lover David Furnish*

"I can say that my support is waning right now."

—Former President **Fidel V. Ramos** *on his support for GMA, after the Constitutional Commission recommended that local elections be postponed*

"It doesn't mean that it would keep me from being what I am and from doing what I want."

—**Fr. Robert Reyes,** *after being told by the Church to go on sabbatical—an alleged euphemism for being fired from his parish*

"While we are busy with 11th hour shopping, the Palace is also busy with 11th-hour appointments."

—**Rep. Etta Rosales,** *on Malacañang's hurried appointment of two new officials*

"Helping the community first is far more important than the economic rewards."

—**Yvette Paragua,** *nursing topnotcher, on why she isn't leaving to work abroad*

"It's not as cheerful as normal, because we're still remembering our friends and family who died."

—**Santiani Saraghi,** *Thai tsunami survivor, one year after the tragedy*

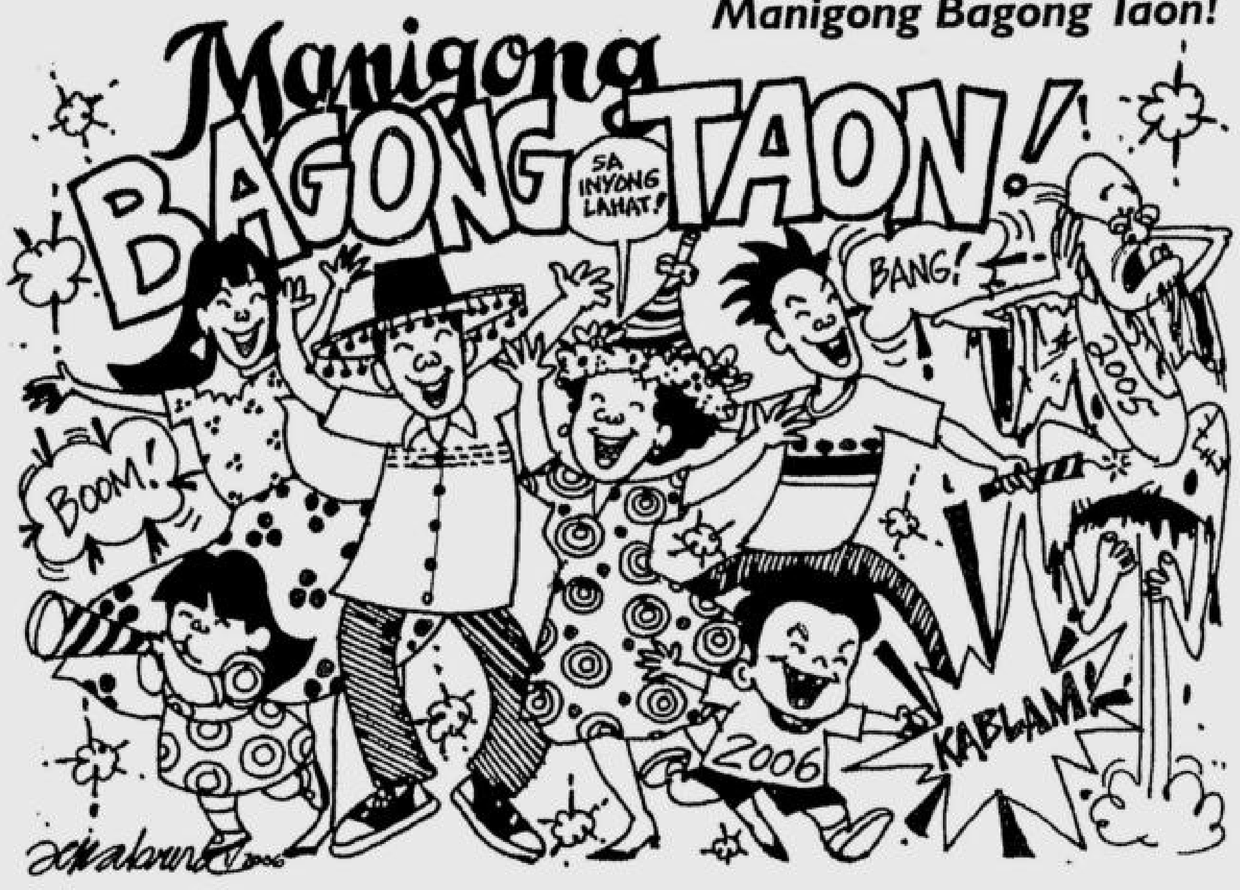
"He fought to his last breath."

—**Dean Barbers,** *on the death of his father, former congressman, senator and cabinet secretaryRobert Barbers, after a long battle with throat cancer*

Pinoy Nga!

Jess Abrera

Manigong Bagong Taon!


Manigong
BAGONG TAON!
SA INYONG LAHAT!
BANG!
2005
BOOM!
2006
KABLAM!

Love Notes

Joe D'Mango

How Do I Make Her Notice Me?

I love her and want us to stay friends, but she is slowly slipping away

Dear Joe,

Call me Vhong. I first saw Ces in an event; she stepped on my foot but did not apologize. When I turned around, I saw a beautiful angelic face. I felt something that day, Joe, which I cannot explain. Although we didn' t have a chance to talk, I know I felt that magic. It was love at first sight!

That day I overheard her say that she was a member of this online group. I was excited because I was a member of the same group. I was determined to find her. And luckily, I did. We sent e-mail, exchanged stories and texted each other frequently. Every day I felt something deeper. I knew that I loved her but didn't say anything about how I felt because I was scared to lose her.

We went out once a month, sometimes twice or thrice. We watched shows and concerts and attended parties together. This went on for five months, until she told me that she was now in a relationship. I was hurt but I continued to love her secretly.

One day, I blurted out what I felt for her: I love her and will give up everything for her. We stayed friends, and I was grateful and thankful to God for that blessing of friendship.

After one year and five months, they broke up. I was sad in a way because she was hurting. But soon, she slowly began to change. She started avoiding me. Someone told me that she's now in a new relationship. I was hoping that I would be given a chance but I know my place. I am just a friend to her, no more, no less. But I miss her, Joe. I don't know what to do. I think of her every day. I love her even if I know that she won't love me back. I want her joys to be my joys, and her pains I want to endure alone.

I need your help, Joe. I can't think of anything that will make her notice me again. I want us to stay friends, but even that seems to be fading. She is slowly slipping away. Please help me.

Vhong

Dear Vhong,

It is sometimes unfortunate that the people we love choose not to love us back. I believe that we all have a match in this world, and when one's attempt at a relationship fails, it simply means that the relationship is not meant to be. This could be easily dealt with if only our emotions were not involved, but more often than not, the heart rules strongly over our head.

Vhong, I believe that if it is only friendship that you want from Ces, she wouldn't be so distant. I know she treats you as a friend, but she knows that you feel something more than friendship for her, and maybe that's why she chooses to shy away from you. She knows in her heart that she can never be more than a friend and she probably feels more uncomfortable now that she knows your true feelings for her.

Telling her you loved her may not have been such a good idea because it distanced her from you, but I believe that being true to what you felt was something you owe yourself and Ces. There couldn't have been a better way to let her know that she was special to you. You took a risk when you told her you loved her and now you truly know where you stand.

Vhong, this is the perfect time for you to realize that your life should not be dependent on someone else's presence. You have to strive to be happy even without Ces. Remember that at one point in your life, you should stop missing her and start thinking about what you have been missing because of her. You are missing an opportunity to be happy with someone else. Someone who will not consciously avoid you but choose to be with you. Someone who will not just listen when you say "I love you," but someone who will say it, too, and love you even more.

LoveNotes is heard every Friday at 10:15 a.m. with replays at 7 p.m. on Wave 89.1 FM. Get your daily love advice from Joe D' Mango via SMS by texting "lovenotes" to 2968

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

TV GUIDE

Sunday, January 1, 2006

Sayaw. Drama. Iba.
Shall We Dance?
The Celebrity Dance Challenge
Sunday 9 PM
hosted by Lucy Torres Gomez
ABC
Iba Tayo!

Provided by ClickTheCity.com

For more TV schedules:
1. Visit www.ClickTheCity.com or wap.clickthecity.com.
2. Key in CTC TV and send to 2333 for Globe and to 225 for Smart. PhP2.50 per SMS sent.

Channel	2:30PM	3:00PM	3:30PM	4:00PM	4:30PM	5:00PM	5:30PM	6:00PM	6:30PM	7:00PM	7:30PM	8:00PM	8:30PM	9:00PM	9:30PM	10:00PM	10:30PM	11:00PM	11:30PM
ABC5		RingsideTV		PBA										ShallWeDance?					
ABS-CBN2	A.S.A.PFanatics		PinoyBigBrother Buzz		TheBuzz				Goin'Bulilit		SearchForAStar InAMillion	RatedK		TVPatrolWorld	PinoyBigBrother	SundayFamily Cinema			
AXN		Movie					SamsungSports World	AXNShakedown		Ultimate GuinnessWorld Records	Ultimate GuinnessWorld Records	Numb3rs (Season1)		CSI Crime SceneInvestigation(Season4)		CSI NY (Season1)		CSI Miami (Season3)	
CartoonNetwork	X-MenEvolution	TeenageMutant NinjaTurtles	Xiaolin Showdown	Tom&Jerry Show		TBA						PowerpuffGirls	CourageThe CowardlyDog	Dexter's Laboratory	CrushGearNitro	PowerRangers NinjaStorm	SupermanThe AnimatedSerie	HarveyBirdman (11.15PM)	MissionHill
Cinemax	PinkCadillac				FierceCreatures			HerculesAndThe CircleOfFire			BodySnatchers			The51stState			FinalDestination 2		
CNN	International Correspondents	WorldNews	TheDailyShow WithJonStewart	WorldNews	Design360	WorldNews	WorldSport	LarryKingLive		WorldNews	TalkAsia	WorldNews	MainSail	WorldNews	WorldSport	Global Challenges	Business Traveller	TalkAsia	TheDaily ShowWith JonStewart
DisneyChannel	Recess	TotallySpies	LizzieMcguire	Brandy&Mr. Whiskers	Lilo&Stitch	TotallySpies	Mr.Bean	PhilOfTheFuture	SuiteLifeOfZack AndCody	That'sSoRaven	WonderfulWorld OfDisney			MrBean	America'sFunniestHomeVideo	PhilOfTheFuture	EvenStevens	WonderfulWorld OfDisney	
ESPN		Track&Field/ AthleticsIAAF GrandPrixII						NFLFootball- GiantsVsRaiders				SportscenterAsia		CollegeFootball BowlGame'05 HoustonBowl					
ETC	Will&Grace	SaturdayNight Live		VeronicaMars		AmericanDreams		OneTreeHill		QueerEyeFor TheStraightGuy		AverageJoe		RatedOh!	TheInsider Weekend	MeetMyFolks		ETWeekend	
EWTN	PilgrimageToThe ShrinesOfEastern Europe	Angelus (3.15PM)	TheDonutMan	AdventuresIn Odyssey	Deep Conversation: DeepPrayer	RosaryWith MotherAngelica	OctaviaDias	RomeReports	EWTNBookmark	EWTNGlobal Showcase		OnwardPilgrims	MirrorOfThe Soul	SundayMass (SAP)Live			LifeIsWorth Living	TheAbundantLife	
FoxNews		BeltwayBoys	FoxNewsWatch	FoxReport Saturday		HeartlandWith JohnKasich		BigStory WeekendEdition		BeltwayBoys	FoxNewsWatch	Fox&Friends Sunday						FoxNewsLive	
GMA7	Gigsters	LoveToLove		S-Files				Mahiwagang Baul		Starstruck3		Mel&Joey		AllStarK		DaddyDiDoDu		SundayNightBox Office	
HallmarkChannel	TheNannyIII	Gunpowder Treason&Plot				Gunpowder Treason&Plot				Cupid&Cate				JaneDoe VanishingAct			TheCaseOf TheWhitechapelVampire		
HBO	BeyondBorders				TheMambo Kings(4.45PM)				AlongCamePolly			ThePunisher				TheDevil'sOwn			
IBC13		EZShop		EZShop	Mr.Taxman	HomeShopping Network		HomeShopping Network		LegacyOfHero		TBA				IyoAng Katarungan	ELSHADDAI		
JackTV		Reno911	BlueCollarTV	X-Play	Sweat	StreetSmart	TheSibShow	HipHopNation	RideWithFunk MasterFlex	WWEAfterburn		WWE Smackdown				SouthPark	TheManShow	InsomniacW/ DaveAttell	BeatThe Geeks
LifestyleNetwork	DateWithDesign	GroundRules	OuterSpaces	YourPrivate Island	BreathingRoom	BackToBasics	Barefoot Contessa	EverydayItalian	CiaoAmerica WithMario	TBA								CleanHouse	
MTVPhilippines	Mush		LagunaBeach	MTVCribs	WadeRobson Project	VivaLaBam	PimpMyRide	GetHitch'd	MTVScreen	The70'sHouse	SpringBreak	MTVPresents				WhateverThings	MTVHits	EssentialVH1	
MYX		PinoyMYX Countdown				Take5	MYXBandarito	MYXNews	StarMYX	MYXLOG	PopMYX	MYXPresents		MYXHitChart				MYXBacktrax	OPMMYX
National Geographic		Amazing Moments		TheOtherFinal		ScienceOf Football		Top5		Wow!		AboutAsia/No Borders: Longest River		Nat'lGeographic Specials:BestOf TheWeek, Earth InReview		TreasureFleet: TheAdventures OfZhengHe			
NBN				3rdASEAN Para-Olympic Games		KamaoSa Kamao		TinigngBayan (Live)			Inter-AksyonSa Bayan	BattleRoyale		TheSportsList	GoForGold		Business& Leisure		Unlimited Diving
Nickelodeon	Ned'sDeclassified SchoolSurvival Guide	Unfabulous	NaturallySadie	Romeo	Drake&Josh	Zoey101	AvatarTheLast Airbender	DannyPhantom	MyLifeAsA TeenageRobot	1,2,3		FourEyes	Zoey101	Unfabulous	GirlsInLove	Ned'sDeclassified SchoolSurvival Guide	FourEyes	TheWild Thornberrys	TheBrothers Garcia
PBO			MahalKitaFinal Answer				IkawLamang				SinasambaKita				R2KConcert				ScorpioNights 2
Qtv		Baywalk		JoanOfArcadia		Girang Fashionista		AngPinaka...		PopStarKids		MayTrabahoKa		SundaySuper Sine				MINT(Music Interactive)	
RPN9		GolfPower	AutoExtreme	Fistorama		JAG		JAG		NavyNcis		WithoutATrace		NBAOnRPN				SureHits	TheWorking President
SBN21				BuhayPinoy		ShoppersVoice		SonyBmgVideo				OrasNgHimala		Orasng Katotohanan		GabayAtAksyon			
SolarSports	WTA2005Tour C'shipsbyLA RoundRobin					IBFChinaOpen FinalsWomen's Doubles		GWS Ep53-2005	NBAJam	NBaGame Spurs@Nuggets					SwissCup International Gymnastics				
SportsPlus				2005PGATour YearinReview		FMXEp.04 DenverShowB		WorldPokerTour ep.10Hollywood				Raceworld		BDPalmSprings	BDSouthBeach	ADTGolfSkills Chal.Day2			
StarMovies			BornOnThe FourthOfJuly					TheWholeTen Yards(5.50PM)			TheHaunted Mansion			TheVillage				TheLeagueOf Extraordinary Gentlemen	
StarWorld		TheApprentice/ JohnLennon WorkingClass Hero		TruCalling		BusinessWeek Asia	TravelAsia	Smallville		TheSimpsons	KumarsAt42	OprahPrime Time		KoffeeWith Karan		TheRobinsons/ TheNightyNight	Human Remains	TheSimpsons	OprahPrime Time
Studio23								Nginiig		YSpeak		Joey	LivingWithFran	Will&Grace	F	DigitalTour (10.15PM)	ChefsOnThe Go(10.45PM)		BuffyThe Vampire Slayer

TV SCHEDULES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE.

Ang inyong tagapaghatid ng ulat-pangmulat
alas-10 ng gabi na! Tuwing Huwebes
Ating kabalitaan
Cheri Mercado
Dito lang sa ABC
INQ TV

Ryan Agoncillo & Alex Syfu

Albert Martinez, Shirley Kuan, Marilen Faustino and Hans Montenegro

DDB CEO Gil Chua welcomes guests

Jayme with Billy Samson, Melvin Mangada TBWA, Peachy Bretana Publicis

McDonald s Kenneth Yang, DMA s Merlee Jayme, DDB s Gil Chua, PLDT & Smart s Polly Nazareno, Smart s Dan Ibarra &DM9 s Alex Syfu

Miss Brazil with Marc Nelson

DDB Group Vice Chair Dimacali with Jayme and Syfu

Brazilian Agency DM9 JaymeSyfu opens in Manila

DM9 JaymeSyfu, sister company of multi awarded Brazilian Agency DM9 DDB opened in Manila with a colorful 'carnaval' last December 8 at the Cuisine of the Embassy, Fort Bonifacio. Alex Syfu welcomed clients from PLDT, Smart, Splash, HBC, McDonald's, Asia Brewery and many more while partner Merlee Cruz-Jayme introduced the members of their newly formed agency. DDB CEO Gil Chua , DDB Chairman Lito de Joya and DDB Vice Chairman and Chief Marketing Officer Susan Dimacali offered a toast to their 250 guests .

Industry friends and family enjoyed the Brazilian bash complete with Brazilian drinks, lots of Samba, and Mardi Gras headgears (courtesy of well known artist Rollie de Leon). Famous Production designer Butch Garcia, dressed up the two floor club with giant bright colored parasols and festive decor. TV Personality Ryan Agoncillo hosted the event .Miss Brazil - Miss Earth 2005, escorted by Marc Nelson, also graced the festive night.

Dm9's Jayme & Syfu both started in big multinational agencies with a wealth of experience from Unilever, P&G, J&J, Splash, Jollibee, Pizza Hut, Max's, Kraft, Nestle, Pepsi, Coca-Cola, Toyota, Mitsubishi, PLDT to Smart.

Group Chief Creative Officer Merlee Jayme was Ace Saatchi & Saatchi's first woman VP Executive Creative Director in the agency's 54 year history before she moved to BBDO Guerrero Ortega for a year as its Executive Creative Director.

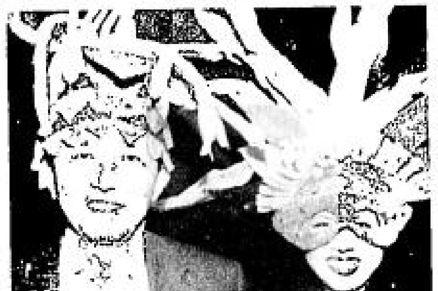
Alex Syfu, Dm9's Managing Director and Chief Operating Officer, started his career in J.Walter Thompson then moved on to McCann Erickson Manila as the Business Unit Director of the San Miguel Group. The next eight years brought Alex to McCann South East Asia's various offices and most notably became the General Manager of McCann Erickson Indonesia. Before joining Dm9, he was the General Manager of BBDO Guerrero Ortega and its below-the- line agency, Proximity.

Just after formally opening its doors to their young passionate team, DM9 JaymeSyfu was already tasked by its sister agency DDB Philippines to lead the pitch of the year for Mc Donald's. Winning the prestigious fast-food account was one of the biggest news circulating in the Philippine Advertising congress in Cebu last November.

DM9 started operations in Sao Paulo, Brazil in 1989. In 1997, it merged with advertising giant ddb worldwide, thus forming DM9 DDB. The very next year, it became the first Brazilian agency to win "Agency of the Year" at Cannes. They did it again the following year, becoming one of only two agencies in the world to hold the title twice. 66 Cannes lions, two grand prix, and an unprecedented three "Agency of the Year" honors later, it became one of the world's creative powerhouses and one of Brazil's biggest agencies in billings.

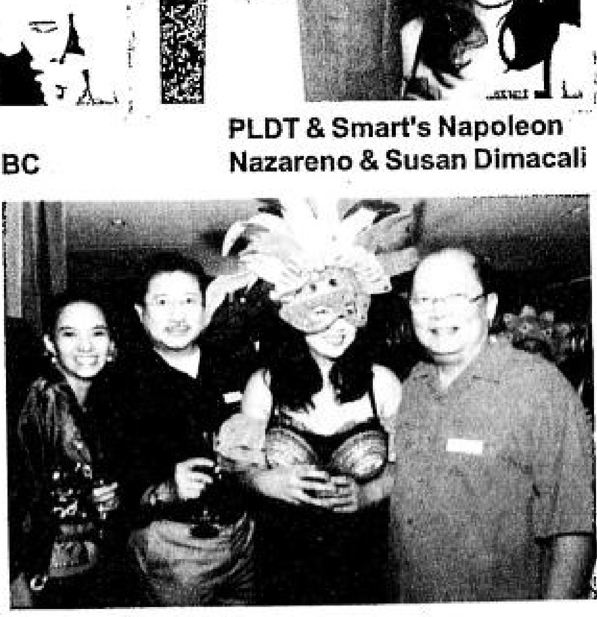
OMP`s Erwin Villegas, DM9s` Rizza Guilas and Diday Alcudia, OMP`s Miko Salud

Dr. & Dra. Hortaleza of Splash Corp. and HBC



PLDT & Smart's Napoleon Nazareno & Susan Dimacali

Jeng Gambol, ABC 5's August benitez, ABS CBN's Robert Labayen & DM9's Diday Alcudia



McCann's Joey Venezuela, Susan Dimacali with husband Ramon

Syfu and Jayme with Unitel Productions' Tony Gloria

Syfu and Jayme with Asia rewery Jen Alcantara

Smart's Vinchy Cuyegkeng, Dimacali, Jayme Ara Mina and Syfu

Tim Yap, Nicole Hernandez, Borgy Manotoc, Derek Ramsey & Brent Javler

DM9 Founding Members

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